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Palestinian Affairs

Reports on Palestine National Council Session

Leaders To Meet Prior to PNC

LD2209205191 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] The Palestinian leadership is expected to hold a meeting in Algiers later this evening to discuss the points of disagreement prior to the opening of the Palestine National Council [PNC] session. The meeting will bring together President 'Arafat and the leaders of the Palestinian organizations.

'Abbas on Committee Membership, Peace

JN2009120691 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 20 Sep 91 pp 1, 13

[By Sa'd al-Silawi in Tunis]

[Text] Muhammad 'Abbas, alias Abu-al-'Abbas, secretary general of the Palestine Liberation Front [PLF], is expected to be removed from the PLO Executive Committee during the Palestine National Council session in Algiers. SAWT AL-SHA'B has learned that 'Ali Ishaq has been nominated to represent the PLF instead of Abu-al-'Abbas.

In an interview with SAWT AL-SHA'B, Abu-al-'Abbas asserted that he will not nominate himself to the PLO Executive Committee.

Asked if the decision is linked to recent political developments or to U.S. wishes, he said his presence on the national arena is not linked to his official militant position as a member of the PLO Executive Committee. He said the militant programs advocated by the PLF were not produced by him as the PLF secretary general or by any individual from the PLF, but were the result of struggles within the national framework.

He said the Palestinian condition is mature, and that within this context, all ideas and trends can grow. He added: Some see in the PLF's militant course a positive picture they support and promote. Others may see that it does not serve their political course or inclinations. We have no objection to anyone opposing us. On the contrary, if he does so within the national framework, then he has the right to express his view in whichever way he deems appropriate. We, for our part, have the right to express our opinion and position.

He pointed out that some people think that the United States offered the Palestinians their rights on a silver platter, and then came Abu-al-'Abbas to drop and overturn the platter. He said: This is not true. The truth is that the Palestinian national struggle still needs intensive militant efforts to maintain the general national process. We have not yet reached the point that would allow us to consider isolating certain means of armed struggle for the sake of new means.

He also said he believes there is a need to combine all cases of political and military struggle to form a picture for possible successes in the future. He added: But talk about good intentions and Palestinian love letters to the United States will not be useful. He stressed that he still insists that one-sided love is absolutely useless.

Regarding the PLF's position on the peace process, especially following U.S. assurances, he said there are no assurances but mere word games. He said: The Americans have not said anything yet. Assurances must balance out the assurances to Israel because the Palestinians do indeed need assurances, while Israel is an entity that exists on the ground and practices all forms of oppression against the Palestinian people. Talk about assurances for Israel constitutes an actual infringement on the Palestinians. Where are the assurances?

He said he believes in the PLO's right to represent the Palestinian people and that he will never depart from what is approved within the national Palestinian framework. He stressed that he will explain all the details during the PNC session. He added: But the principle proposed now bypasses the PLO, Jerusalem, and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and to establish a state. Despite all of this, the PLO was not asked to participate.

Abu-al-'Abbas added that before giving his view about the peace process, he must hear whether or not there is an invitation to the PLO to take part in the peace process. On the formula of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, he said there is a substantial difference between talking about a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation and a delegation formed by the PLO and Jordan. He indicated that, in principle, he does not see a just settlement in the offing. He stressed support for national Palestinian unity and for PLO decisions.

He said his front will submit a working paper to the PNC on the experience of the past years and on the American attitude toward the Palestinian issue. He said this paper seriously calls for a continued national Palestinian struggle to reach national Palestinian objectives. It also calls for support for national unity and the PLO, and for support and promotion of the intifadah and the PLO institutions to enable them to cope with the nature of the upcoming stage. He denied the existence of any differences with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat.

On the possibility that the PLF would halt military operations against Israel, he said that the answer to this question depends on whether the PLO is invited to take part in the settlement. He said if the PLO is invited, he will discuss the matter proceeding from his position within the PLO. He noted that he will support safeguards for the Palestinian position. He explained that if the PLO approves the general national situation, he will act in a manner serving this situation.

On the possibility of being a scapegoat for peace, Abu-al-'Abbas said that personal considerations are the last thing he thinks of. He said that although he is the PLF's secretary general, his comrades believe that militant tasks are still there, and they will decide whether he remains or not. As for the general national situation, he said he basically is engaged in the struggle to achieve the Palestinian people's national aspirations. He explained that if a political course achieves part of the Palestinian people's national aspirations, and the price is Abu-al-'Abbas, he will voluntarily and willingly pay the price. He said he does not mind it, because by such an action he would feel that he was successful in enabling the Palestinian people to regain some of their rights.

Although he expressed doubts, he said he hoped that all political factions will take part in the PNC on the basis of respect for other views in the national arena. He said this respect boosts his belief that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative. He said the absence of some factions will not lessen PLO unity and representation. He said such factions do not doubt that the PLO is the sole representative.

He said the United States does not decide who represents the Palestinian people. Even a Palestinian cub can represent the Palestinian people through the PLO. He said: The PLO should be sent an invitation. Then we can decide.

He said he presented names to fill nine seats allocated to the front. He said he has been told that the number has been reduced, but this has not been confirmed by the Palestinian leadership.

PFLP's Habash on Peace Efforts

JN2109103191 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 21 Sep 91 p 12

[Interview with George Habash, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, PFLP, by Sa'd al- Silawi in Tunis; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Silawi] Dr. George Habash, what is your opinion of the proposed peace plans, the U.S. peace plan in particular?

[Habash] This plan is being presented during the worst Arab state of affairs, officially speaking, whose features are disintegration and collapse. More than this, it is being presented during the worst international state of affairs: I mean an international situation in which the United States is enjoying the status of the number one power. In light of this official Arab and international situation, the U.S. Administration and Israel feel that this is the time to impose the worst settlement of the Palestine question, one which in fact could liquidate it. This is very clear when we scrutinize the plan for the Palestine question submitted by Secretary Baker. This plan is based on a denial of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. At the same time, it rejects recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The most that this plan offers is self-administration and autonomy. This is my opinion of the current settlement plan. Hence, the PFLP will work hard to have the Palestine National Council reject the plan clearly and firmly, and at the same time will define the principles on which any settlement to the Palestine question should be based. These principles consist of adherence to Palestinian constants; namely, that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, that the Palestinian people have a right to self-determination, that occupied Jerusalem is part of the occupied Arab territories, that the settlements must be halted, that there must be a state, and that there must be repatriation. These are the definitive objectives of any settlement of the Palestine question.

[Al-Silawi] Is there any specific working paper that the PFLP will present to the PNC? If the PNC approves participation in the peace plan, what will be the PFLP's stance?

[Habash] Let us take the first part of the question. The PFLP will present the view that I have mentioned, not through a written memorandum, but through the political speech I will deliver at the council in my capacity as PFLP secretary general. The PFLP's view at the council will not be restricted to this central political position. Other comrades are supposed to speak about the democratic reform process in the PLO's institutions. Our concept of this process in fact was contained in the working paper presented by the PFLP a year ago or more, and which we consider the basis for democratic reform. Other comrades will present basic arguments concerning the intifadah and the fate and tasks of national Palestinian action in Lebanon. These are the main topics the PFLP will raise.

[Al-Silawi] Is there coordination with other factions and forces regarding these positions?

[Habash] We coordinate with the forces that automatically agree with our positions. As for the second part of the question—about our position in case the majority decides to participate in the peace conference—I want to say first that up to the present moment, that is something unlikely. It is not clear that the majority will make such a decision, especially after it has become clear from Baker's latest tour that the final U.S. offer does not give us anything even concerning the building of settlements, which is a sensitive matter to any Palestinian delegation that negotiates with the enemy. Even on this issue, Baker has not promised to stop the settlement building before the negotiations begin. Hence, to this moment, I am ruling out the possibility that a decision to participate in the conference will be made. I believe that the decision that will be made will say that any participation in the Baker conference, which they unjustifiedly call a peace conference, will be based on clear principles which to date are not available.

[Al-Silawi] Dr. George Habash, let us assume for the sake of argument that the PNC approves participation in the conference. The PFLP only expressed reservations on the resolutions of the 19th PNC session.

[Habash] If the PNC approves participation in the proposed capitulation process, not in a true peace process, our position, I believe, will be different from that adopted during the 19th PNC session. As I said, we believe the PNC is not likely to approve participation, but if this happens, we will be in front of a new situation, and I will call the PFLP's Central Committee and Political Bureau into a meeting to make the necessary decision. We, of course, will remain in the PNC and the PLO Central Council; these are legitimate institutions to which the Executive Committee is answerable.

[Al-Silawi] This means if the PLO participates, you will leave the Executive Committee.

[Habash] We might, but it is not absolute. Such a development is unlikely, however, because I do not think the PNC will decide to participate in the Baker conference.

[Al-Silawi] Will separation from the PLO be a possibility?

[Habash] Historically, we have not left the PLO as a legislative establishment. It is true that in 1968 we did not attend the PNC session, and in another year we attended only symbolically, but apart from this we have been participating in the PNC since 1964.

[Al-Silawi] In light of U.S. hegemony over the world, the disturbance of the balance of power, and the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union, it is said that the Palestinians will lose if they do not participate in the peace process. On the other hand, if the Palestinians participate, and the conference fails to reach solutions ensuring Palestinian rights, they will not be committed to anything. The Communist Party in the Soviet Union is now an underground organization. Are you not worried about the future of the PLO after 30 years of struggle?

[Habash] I will only worry if the PLO adopts a capitulatory position; that is, if it surrenders and holds up its hands in face of this major disturbance in the balance of power. Otherwise, I will not be worried, because the PLO will then be a leader of a people seeking self-determination. When we establish the image of 6 million Palestinians democratically struggling—not necessarily through the various methods of violence—for their self-determination, it will be difficult to imagine that any force in the world can silence, annihilate, or erase these 6 million people from the world map; no force can prevent this human gathering from fulfilling its objectives. I realize that we are going through a very difficult situation, dictating that we think deeply and ponder the future of our revolution and the PLO, but I have come to the conclusion that a sound political line based on freedom, stability, the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, Palestinian adherence to legitimate world resolutions, and the understanding that 6 million Palestinians are struggling for their just cause, is invincible, even with this disturbance in the balance of power and the U.S. domination of the world, which may continue for a few years.

[Al-Silawi] Dr. George Habash, do you think the Soviet Union can still play a role in favor of the Palestinian cause?

[Habash] As I said, you are conducting this interview with me in the worst international and official Arab situation. But things are always changing, and the current U.S. hegemony will not go on forever. The shape of the world will not remain as it is now, and the Palestinian people will find allies in the world—allies who will at least ease U.S. antagonism to the hopes and ambitions of these people. It is difficult for the Soviet Union to remain in such a situation. And do not forget Europe, France, China, and other democratic forces. This is the most difficult moment, but it will not last forever.

[Al-Silawi] Through your contacts with Syria, is it possible for the Syrians to go to the peace conference if the PLO does not attend?

[Habash] I regret to say that the Syrians announce day and night that they are going to the conference whether the PLO goes or not. But I must ask the following question: Assume that official Syria, Jordan, Egypt, the Gulf states, the Maghreb states, Somalia, Djibouti, and others go to the peace conference. If the Palestinians keep away from it, insisting that they will attend only a conference held on certain grounds, can Washington and the Arab countries solve the Palestine question? The answer is no. By common consent, the Palestine question is the essence of the Middle East conflict. How can this question be solved without the PLO, which represents the Palestinian people? The PLO is supposed to realize the secret of its strength: It represents a just cause, the cause of a persecuted and wronged people entitled to their rights in full.

[Al-Silawi] But you may come under strong pressure; you may be dislodged and chased. Where will you go under the existing circumstances?

[Habash] The PLO is like a sponge, not an egg. While the egg breaks under pressure, the sponge can absorb all pressure, no matter how much. [passage omitted]

[Al-Silawi] What about the split in the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine? What is your position on the matter?

[Habash] It is very painful.

[Al-Silawi] We know that you and President 'Arafat were members of a mediation committee. Who foiled your mission, Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh or Nayif Hawatimah?

[Habash] Please allow me not to answer.

[Al-Silawi] Let us go back to the peace issue and the dispute between Israel and the United States over the guarantees affair. Do you think it is a theatrical performance?

[Habash] I do not think it is. But it is inconceivable to say that this dispute will totally undermine the strategic alliance between imperialism and Zionism, between the U.S. Administration and Israel. [passage omitted]

Abu-Sharif To Discuss Israeli Assurances

JN2009164791 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] Brother Bassam Abu-Sharif, adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat, left for Paris yesterday on a visit to France. The visit is part of a two-day European tour prior to the convening of the Palestine National Council session on 23 September in Algiers.

The Palestinian official is expected to hold talks aimed at exploring the European stance toward what has transpired concerning the assurances given by U.S. Secretary of State Baker to the Zionist entity authorities regarding peace negotiations.

It is known that the PNC will debate a political document on Palestinian participation in the peace conference scheduled for October.

AFP: DFLP Threatens Boycott

NC2009202191 Paris AFP in English 1826 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] Tunis, Sept 20 (AFP)—A main Palestinian group threatened Friday to boycott next week's session of the Palestine National Council (PNC), or parliament in exile, unless the PLO rejects the U.S. terms for a Middle East peace conference.

The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), itself a PLO member, charged that "influential leaders" within the organisation were delaying a decision in order to present the PNC with a "fait accompli."

The PNC opens in Algiers on Monday to decide on the proposed peace conference, to be sponsored by the United States and Soviet Union.

In a statement delivered here to AFP, the DFLP said it would only attend the session if the PLO first adopted a "clear and unified stand refusing the U.S. formula for a peace conference."

It called on the organisation to insist on "its right to directly represent the Palestinian people in any peace conference," in defiance of Israel's rejection of any PLO role in the talks.

PLO officials have criticized a letter of assurance U.S. Secretary of State James Baker delivered earlier this week to a Palestinian delegation in Jerusalem. But the organisation has not issued an official reaction.

Hawatimah Discusses PLO Leadership

JN2009191791 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1745 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Telephone interview with Nayif Hawatimah, leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, by Kamal Tarabayh and Muhammad Kamash; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Tarabayh] Mr. Nayif Hawatimah, what is the position of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] concerning the convening of the upcoming Palestine National Council session in Algiers?

[Hawatimah] So far, we can say that the DFLP's position goes in the direction of not participating in the upcoming Algiers' PNC session. The main cause is both political and organizational. We have endeavored to form a new PNC that would accommodate all the forces, currents, trends, and figures in order to be truly representative of the Palestinian people's will inside the occupied territory, in the Palestinian camps, and in the Palestinian gatherings in the diaspora; and to reflect all the developments that have occurred in our people's ranks and their nationalist movements and the intifadah over recent years.

We regret to say that the current formation of the new PNC is a bureaucratic, high-handed move; it has been effected behind closed doors. This has engendered a large-scale wave of displeasure and protest among the ranks of the Palestinian people and our people's steadfast camps.

[Tarabayh] Exactly, what are your objections to the PNC's convening; your practical objections?

[Hawatimah] We had hoped that the PNC would be formed along three axes, in accordance with what we had agreed upon at the beginning. This would be 150 figures who are independent by word and deed including scientific, literary, political, and social figures; 150 representing the PLO factions and the forces that have not yet participated in the PNC; and 150 representing the popular organizations and armed cadres.

This composition was not respected at all. The vast majority of the seats were filled with old characters, most of whom have lost their role and influence among our people's ranks. The proportions of the forces have not been just at all. We have asked that the numbers be based on percentages and that the wishes of the people's gatherings be taken into consideration. Regrettably, the formation was based on bureaucratic, high-handed arrangements that included those who no longer enjoy popular and mass support. Most of them lost their links with the Palestinian masses, the camps, and the Palestinian revolutionary forces.

Therefore, the new PNC is only new by name. Most of the members are of the old school. It is of a complex bureaucratic nature that does not reflect the people's will, and does not reflect the will of the vital forces including the qualified scientific, social, and political forces in the popular ranks.

Moreover—after a full month of preparations for the PNC—we thought that we could agree upon a clear political working paper to be addressed to our people prior to the PNC meeting, especially the intifadah people and the camps, in order to canvass their opinions before reaching the new PNC. However, the policy of vacillation and stalling by certain influential commanding circles in the PLO has hindered the preparatory committee's work. So far—only three days separates us from the PNC session—we have not reached any political agreement or common ground. Indeed, yesterday we were surprised to find the influential Palestinian command of the PLO cowering under pressure from Washington and Egypt by agreeing to allow a woman from the occupied territory to leave for Amman to meet with Baker. This being done within the framework of pressures aimed at forcing the PLC to facilitate the departure of figures from the West Bank and Gaza to join the Jordanian delegation and go to the peace conference in accordance with the formula of representation proposed by the Americans and the Israelis and in accordance with the umbrella of a solution proposed by the Americans.

All of this clearly indicates that the possibility of reaching a joint policy in word and deed is difficult and very complex; a policy which we have been experiencing over the past four years. We have frankly said that we are not prepared to continue this adventurous and experimental [tajribiyah] policy because its results have been very negative.

[Tarabayh] Nayif Hawatimah, is this position on participation final, or is there room for some give and take?

[Hawatimah] There is room, provided that we reach an agreement on a concrete, clear, and unambiguous political document prior to the convening of the PNC session; and that the PLO leadership stops its crude interference in the internal affairs of the Palestinian factions; and stops financing secessionist or divisionist coup attempts.

[Kamash] Brother Nayif Hawatimah, which Palestinian factions and figures share your view?

[Hawatimah] Many factions and figures share our criticisms. Perhaps you have heard that a number of independent members have resigned, including Professors Abu-Lughod and Edward Said, Hani Qaddumi, 'Abd-al-Muhsin Qattan, and others. Also, almost all factions share our criticism. I can firmly include the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front, the Arab Liberation Front, the Palestine Liberation Front, and a broad component of Fatah. We also firmly believe that the financing of divisionist and secessionist attempts of the PLO factions and the interference in the internal affairs of the PLO factions must stop because both these acts threaten the fate of national unity and constantly jeopardize and undermine national alliances.

[Kamash] Are you referring to the recent split in the DFLP, led by Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh?

[Hawatimah] What happened is an announcement, for the fifth time, of the splitting of this group from the DFLP. It is not the first time. The first time was on 16 January, when the Gulf war started. The second time was on 2 April; the third on 23 July; the fourth on 11 August; and the fifth on 11 September. Each time the announcement has, regrettably, conveyed an unclear political objective. Now, the announcement is repeated on the eve of the PNC meeting to create political uneasiness and to influence the sound stands and cohesion of democratic and national forces, trying to subject them to political blackmail.

[Kamash] Brother Nayif, it is the right of the masses and people, especially inside the occupied territories, to clearly understand who exactly you mean when you speak of those who stand behind secessionist trends?

[Hawatimah] I have clearly said they are the influential elements of the PLO leadership. I believe this is clear to everybody, and the masses can perfectly understand it, because I absolutely do not seek to engage in personal quarrels. I only want to define the political, organizational, and struggle aspects and axes of the problem. That is why I have said that we still lack the joint political space. The crude interference and financing of divisionist and secessionist attempts has not yet stopped. The call for everybody's participation in the new PNC—all the forces, figures, and competent personnel—has not been achieved the way we have struggled for over the past months. This is why there are possibilities to boycott the PNC session: because we are not ready to bear the responsibility for an experimental, adventurous policy that has cost our people a great deal and has not yielded any positive results.

[Kamash] Brother Nayif Hawatimah, why do you not present your views within the PNC? In other words, do you not believe that your nonparticipation in the PNC session will be a negative stand—a negative, divisionist stand—particularly at this stage?

[Hawatimah] We are not responsible for this situation; those responsible are the ones who are pushing things in this direction, who are determined not to reach common political results before the session so that the session will turn into a clamorous propagandistic demonstration that has nothing to do with serious, concrete, delicate, and candid political decisions.

[Tarabayh] Will this position on the PNC reflect upon your representation in the PLO Executive Committee?

[Hawatimah] Perhaps, yes. The important thing is that we should be very clear in the eyes of our people, with a clear democratic spirit. Therefore, to reach clear political results, our condition is to stop interference in the factions' internal affairs, to stop financing the divisionist plotting operations, and to review many of the (?PNC resolutions). Otherwise, it will be clear to us where things will reach. We are not ready to be responsible for an adventurous experimental policy that is under daily pressures not in the interests of our people.

[Kamash] Brother Nayif Hawatimah, the convening of the PNC coincides with the ongoing peace process in the region. What is your position on this ongoing process, on the Baker tour?

[Hawatimah] The DFLP has always announced, and we announce again, that we support a peace conference that convenes on the basis of the international legitimacy resolutions in which the Palestinian people have a serious and genuine representation. This clearly means that the PLO forms its delegation from inside and outside: Jerusalem is to be represented, and the Palestinian people—represented by a unified delegation—should be at the negotiating table on an equal footing with the other delegations, adhering to the international legitimacy resolutions and the Palestinian peaceful initiative.

What has been proposed to us, until this moment, by the U.S. Administration is very far from the international legitimacy resolutions. The last thing that was proposed was what took place with the struggling Palestinian personalities inside the occupied territory during Mr. Baker's seventh tour. He clearly said: No to the PLO; no to a unified delegation; no to Jerusalem representation—only personalities from the West Bank and Gaza are to join in the Jordanian delegation—no to the Palestinian people's right to self-determination; and no to the cessation of settlements coinciding with the beginning of the peace conference. The ceiling of the solution is autonomy, for five years, under occupation one year after the negotiations. [sentence as heard] We cannot accept this U.S. formula, because it does not meet the minimum level of Palestinian rights or representation.

[Tarabayh] Thank you, Nayif Hawatimah.

[Hawatimah] You are welcome.

More on DFLP Split, PNC Attendance

JN2209130991 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 22 Sep 91 pp 1, 5

[Text] The decision of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) led by Nayif Hawatimah to boycott the Palestine National Council (PNC) meeting in Algiers reflects not only serious scepticism over the American-led peace process, but also the power struggle between the two wings of this major faction of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Mr. Hawatimah made his announcement Saturday after the PLO leadership refused his demands to recognise his wing as the legitimate DFLP and the wing led by Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh as a new independent group in the PLO.

In an interview with the Jordan Times late Friday, Mr. Hawatimah warned that his group was "fed up with ambiguous Palestinian resolutions that are open to different interpretations" and by what he said was the support of the PLO leadership for breakaway factions.

Mr. Hawatimah had demanded that the PLO Executive Committee and the Fatah leadership deal with Mr. 'Abd-Rabbuh's wing as a new breakaway group that has no affiliation with the DFLP.

"We simply could not do that because that will mean we are sanctioning divisions. Moreover, both men have supporters in the DFLP" said a Fatah Central Committee member, who asked not to be named.

If Mr. Hawatimah does indeed boycott the PNC, he will not affect the council's quorum but will definitely create confusion at the PNC, especially that it [will] have to take crucial decisions that cannot tolerate divisions.

Other groups and independents are expected to step up mediation efforts to ensure the presence of Mr. Hawatimah, who had always advocated working from within the PLO and never led a breakaway opposition.

Mr. Hawatimah told the Jordan Times that he was not going to attend the PNC unless there was a clear PLO policy on the peace process.

"We are not going to take part in the session if we do not reach a position paper defining the PLO's position clearly and unequivocally," he said.

Mr. Hawatimah, however, does not rule out the option of a joint delegation with Jordan provided that the basis of the peace conference involves a clear recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

"That should be reflected in the form of Palestinian representation and recognition of the Palestinian right to statehood," he said.

In practical terms, Mr. Hawatimah will accept a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation provided it is clear that the Palestinian delegation represented the PLO and it was on equal footing with the Jordanian side of the joint delegation.

"That means there should be two flags and that the Palestinian delegation will decide its own negotiating position. But this is not what the Americans mean by a joint delegation. They are looking for Palestinian individuals and not Palestinian representatives of the Palestinian people," he argued.

"They do not want to accept a Palestinian delegation as such because they do not want to recognize Palestinian self-determination and national rights," he said.

Consequently any form of participation which negates PLO representation should be rejected, he said.

"Giving up representation is equal to giving up our national rights," he said stressing that his groups will not be part of such a decision by the PNC.

In essence, Mr. Hawatimah's position is not very different from that of other groups such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine of George Habash or the Rival DFLP leader, Mr. 'Abd-Rabbuh, but the others have chosen to attend the PNC.

PLO officials here were hoping that Mr. Hawatimah could be dissuaded from his decision if the leadership was able to reach a mediated compromise to at least freeze the DFLP's differences until after the PNC session.

Both Mr. Hawatimah and Mr. 'Abd-Rabbuh are vying for the leadership of the DFLP which has in the past played a crucial role in drawing up PLO policy and maintaining its unity.

Although differences between Mr. Hawatimah and Mr. 'Abd-Rabbuh are said to be based on political disagreements, they both said this week that they do not accept Palestinian participation in the peace proces according to the U.S. terms.

"We cannot take part in the peace process under the present American terms," Mr. 'Abd-Rabbuh told the Jordan Times Saturday.

Mr. 'Abd-Rabbuh's wing has also called for a clear PLO policy. But the apparent convergence of political stands on the eve of the PNC has not dampened the internal conflict.

By saying he was going to boycott the PNC, Mr. Hawatimah has taken his opposition one step further. PLO officials here believe that Mr. Hawatimah is trying to make the PLO leadership accept his demands for not recognising Mr. 'Abd-Rabbuh's wing as part of the DFLP in the PNC.

Contacts Under Way for United Stance

JN2209082391 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 22 Sep 91 pp 1, 14

[By Riyad Mansur]

[Text] Palestine National Council Speaker Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih has disclosed that intensive contacts are under way between the PLO leadership and leaders of some Palestinian factions to develop a unified position on the peace process.

In a statement to SAWT AL-SHA'B, he said: In view of the difficult circumstances the Palestine question is undergoing, we must not rush to make decisions without studying the various dimensions of the entire Palestinian cause at this stage.

He said the contacts are meant to close ranks and renounce differences with a view to serving the Palestinian people and cause and to foiling enemy designs on the Arab and Muslim nations.

The PNC speaker wondered: Since the cause of the Palestinian people has been wronged this much, why should we miss the chance for peace on the basis of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338?

He said: The world seeks to undermine our cause and keep it languishing in obscurity. We should counter this by giving shape to a unified position and standing united against the surrounding danger, he added.

Never before have the Palestinian people needed a just and comprehensive peace more than now, he said, adding that the United States should work to solve the Palestine question and use a single standard in accordance with international legitimacy.

Shaykh al-Sa'ih said the PNC, which is one of the most democratic establishments in the Arab world, will decide during its 20th session in Algiers tomorrow the future of Palestinian action.

He expressed the hope that the Palestinian people and factions will look toward the future of the Palestine question, which is now more conspicuous in light of current international positions.

Leaders Undecided on Participation

JN2209102191 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 22 Sep 91 pp 1, 5

[From Lamis K. Andoni in Tunis]

[Text] Despite the increasingly hardening positions adopted by various Palestinian groups, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasir 'Arafat is still seeking to secure the backing of these groups and the Palestine National Council (PNC) which will convene in Algiers on Monday, will leave the door open for Palestinian participation, in the peace process, according to senior PLO officials here.

So far the PLO leadership, which held a series of lengthy meetings in Tunis last week,—has failed to reach a decision on whether to authorise or to reject Palestinian participation in the peace process. The Palestinian groups and even some independent members of the PLO Executive Committee have fallen back to a hardline position as a result of disappointment in U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's failure to offer satisfactory assurances to the Palestinians, according to PLO officials.

In the last 48 hours all the major PLO groups, except for Fatah, the biggest organisation in the PLO, decided to reject Palestinian participation in the peace process according to the current American terms, officials from the various groups said.

These include the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) of George Habash, both wings of the Democratic Front for the Liberation or Palestine (DFLP) led by Nayif Hawatimah and Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh respectively, the Palestinian Communist party led by Sulayman Najjab, and smaller groups like the Palestine Liberation Front (PFL).

"We cannot approve Palestinian participation conditions," said Mr. 'Abd-Rabbuh, who is viewed as representing the more moderate wing of the DFLP.

But PLO officials say that most of these groups will support a resolution that will emphasise the basic Palestinian rights and leave the door open for Palestinian participation in the peace process.

The militant shift in the mood in Tunis has provoked concern among PLO officials that the failure to reach an agreement among the groups over a political strategy might seriously undermine what is seen as the most crucial PNC session since the inception of the PLO.

Mr. Hawatimah has been the only leader calling for a boycott of the PNC, but officials believe that he could be dissuaded, especially that his position is seen to be linked to the internal dispute in the DFLP.

The group's tactic is aimed at trying to secure better conditions from the Americans rather than obstructing the process unless there were absolutely no signs of any kind of an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, PLO officials said.

The Fatah Central Committee, however, has not concluded its meetings and the dominant trend inside the movement is calling for a positive resolution.

Meanwhile Mr. 'Arafat, who is also Fatah's leader, is said to have not made up his mind yet, although he is unlikely to allow a PNC resolution blocking the peace process.

Mr. 'Arafat is believed to favour a vaguely worded resolution that leaves him a broad margin of manoeuvring room. But some of his comrades in arms argue that this time the PLO cannot afford to get away with "an indecisive yes-no" resolution.

"Clarity is required. The sensitivity of the issue does not allow for an indecisive resolution," argued Mr. Hawatimah. "Any mistake this time could be fatal."

The PFLP, which has also declared its rejection of the American terms, is also pressing for a clear yes or no position from the PNC.

"We are going to press for a very clear position by the PNC to confront the American project," said Abu-'Ali Mustafa [Mustafa al-Zibri], the second-in command of the PFLP.

Although most of the hardline groups admit that the PLO might have no alternative but to accept Palestinian participation, the leadership in general has been very discouraged by the U.S.' replies to clarifications asked by Palestinian leaders from the occupied territories.

"The U.S.'s replies to Palestinian demands for assurances meet the Israeli conditions and not the Palestinian demands," said Jamil Hilal, head of the PLO information department in Tunis and a leadering member of the DFLP wing led by Mr. 'Abd-Rabbuh.

According to PLO officials, the U.S. has failed to satisfy the minimal PLO demands on the three important issues that could have signalled good will on the part of the administration:

—The U.S. did not agree to guarantee a freeze on Israeli settlements. Mr. Baker told the Palestinian leaders he met in the occupied territories that "the settlements were an obstacle peace."

—The U.S. suggested the postponement of discussion on the status of Jerusalem to a later stage of the process and insisted that Jerusalem cannot be "divided."

—The formula suggested by the U.S. concerning the Palestinian problem was viewed as less than satisfactory. The last offer made by the U.S., in the assurances, is that the U.S. supports self-determination as inalienable right for all nations but that is does not necessarily agree with the concept of self-determination as it is used and understood in the region i.e. statehood.

The PLO leadership viewed the three issues as a test for American intentions. Palestinian officials say that the gap on the more fundamental issues of United Nations resolutions and the functions of the suggested conference "are irreconcilable."

According to the PLO, the American side has refused to meet the Palestinian request for assurances that Security Council resolution 242 means a complete Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories. "We have not even received assurances that the implementation will at least lead to a partial withdrawal," said one PLO official.

The Palestinians have also asked that the suggested conference will be continuous untill all aspects of the Arab-Israeli disputes are solved.

"But the Americans will not accept to give such assurances and insist that there should be no linkage between the various aspects of the conflict," Dr. Hilal said.

PLO officials fear that the U.S. will aim at getting separate peace agreements between the Arab states and Israel prior to an agreement on the Palestinian issue.

"The U.S. will then achieve its priority objective of bringing about the normalisation of Arab-Israeli relations without solving the Palestinian problem," Mr. Abu-'Ali Mustafa warned.

The latest round of talks between Mr. Baker and Palestinian leaders in the occupied territories earlier this week and his meeting with Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi in Amman on Friday have only served to harden positions at the PLO headquarters in Tunis.

That does not necessarily mean that the majority at the PNC will reject Palestinian participation unless an alternative and feasible option is found to avoid the American-led process.

At this stage even the most sceptical PLO officials admit that the organisation might have no other alternative but to give peace a chance. Therefore, the vote might mainly be influenced by the lack of options rather than based on conviction that the peace conference will lead to a solution.

The PNC position will also be influenced by the final decision of Fatah, the independent vote, the mood inside the occupied territories during the convening of the session and Arab and international pressures.

"I fear that the PLO leadership is in position to resist Arab and international pressures," said PLO Executive Committee member 'Abdallah Hurani, who himself favours a qualified acceptance of Palestinian participation and believe that the American assurances are far from being sufficient. [sentence as published]

'Abbas Reportedly Met U.S. Aides

JN2209111691 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 22 Sep 91 pp 1, 14

[By Fu'ad Muhsin]

[Text] Well-informed diplomatic sources have revealed that a meeting took place in complete secrecy between the PLO and the United States in Amman Wednesday [18 September].

The sources said that the meeting was held between Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu-Mazin), member of the PLO Executive Committee and of the Fatah Central Committee, and three of Baker's aides: Dennis Ross, Aaron Miller, and Dan Kurtzer.

The sources added that to enhance the secrecy of the meeting, U.S. sources on Tuesday leaked the news that three officials had not joined Baker in his visits to Cairo and Damascus and instead had remained behind in occupied Palestine to observe Yom Kippur. According to the news, the three officials, being Jews, were not allowed to engage in any kind of activity that day, and the three would rejoin Baker in Jordan on Thursday. However, they arrived in Amman unannounced Wednesday afternoon via the King Husayn [Allenby] Bridge. Mahmud 'Abbas arrived in Amman from Cairo the same day.

On the contents of the talks, the sources said that the United States presented the Palestinian official with the decisions that the United States expects the Palestinian leadership to obtain from the Palestine National Council during its 23 September session in Algiers.

The sources noted that the United States made it clear that it was necessary for PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat to obtain from the PNC an authorization giving him the freedom to decide participation in the peace conference scheduled next month so 'Arafat could then choose to participate through a Palestinian representation arrangement envisioned by the United States.

The sources added that the U.S. delegation restricted the form of Palestinian participation to one option; namely, a joint delegation with Jordan. The United States agreed that the PLO could name several candidates from whom three would eventually be selected. To resolve the matter, the U.S. delegation delivered to Mahmud 'Abbas a list of proposed names that the United States assured him Israel would accept.

The sources pointed out that it was impossible for the PLO to participate with an independent delegation, because this would meet with an Israeli veto. Nor would it be possible to participate within a joint Arab delegation, because some Arab parties invited to the peace conference had pledged to the United States that they would not accept such a formula. Thus, the PLO would be left with the single choice of a joint delegation with Jordan, the names of whose members would be subject to Israeli approval.

The sources said that the U.S. delegation told Mahmud 'Abbas that the Palestinians must not be represented in the proposed conference except by people residing in the occupied territories. At best, they could be people deported from the territories, provided that they are not PLO officials at present.

The sources added that some resignations from the PNC are merely a prelude to the nomination of some of them as members of the Palestinian component of the joint delegation.

The sources noted that the U.S. delegation insinuated that further pressures could be applied on the PLO's financial resources and that more pressure could also be applied on diaspora Palestinians, especially in the Gulf states, if the PLO does not endorse the U.S. perspective of the peace process.

The sources went on to say that the U.S. delegation informed Abu-Mazin that the United States could not guarantee that the outcome of negotiations would be the emergence of a Palestinian state or any other political entity for Palestinians outside self-rule, which could give rise to a relationship between residents of the occupied territories and Jordan. The delegation asserted that the time factor made the dismantlement of settlements in the occupied territories irrelevant, the sources noted. Furthermore, these sources stated that the U.S. delegation told Mahmud 'Abbas that bilateral Palestinian-Israeli talks will tackle the civil rights of the Palestinians who remain there rather than their political rights, such as the right to self-determination, and the right to establish a Palestinian state, or even security issues.

During the meeting, the U.S. delegation hinted that Palestinians inside the occupied territories and in the diaspora will enjoy prosperity if things go in accordance with the U.S. plan. The plan stipulates that the PLO must commit itself, prior to the start of the conference, to halting the intifadah, abandoning the armed struggle option once and for all, and removing certain PLO Executive Committee members from office.

The sources added that the U.S. delegation said that the PLO's failure to allow Palestinians to participate in the conference will not prevent the conference from convening, since none of the concerned parties has made its participation in the conference contingent on Palestinian participation with PLO consent.

Regarding the letters of assurances the United States has given the parties that will be invited to the conference, including the Palestinians, the sources downplayed their importance, indicating that they are mere assurances on how the U.S. Administration understands controversial issues, couched in vague terms such as the land-for-peace principle and the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force. At the same time, however, all of these letters of assurances point out that the conference cosponsors, the United States and the USSR, have no right to interfere in negotiations, to impose anything, or to veto anything.

The sources stated that this point provides sufficient protection for the U.S. Administration, as by so doing, it will not be asked in the future to interfere to enforce its convictions. Thus, each of the parties directly concerned with the conference has the right to interpret any issue as it likes, without committing itself even to the most basic components of the assurances the United States has given to the parties. This is because these assurances are more of an explanation of the way the Americans understand issues rather than an American commitment to implement and effect the understanding.

Egyptian Aid Sought To Gain U.S. Guarantees

PM2309111691 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 Sep 91 p 3

[Unattributed report: "PLO Seeks Egypt's Mediation To Obtain U.S. Letter of Guarantee"]

[Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT bureau—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, has stressed that the Palestinian side will not participate in the peace conference expected to be convened in October without obtaining a U.S. letter of guarantee regarding the substance of the conference and resolving the problem of Arab Jerusalem's representation.

Dr. Sha'th pointed out in an exclusive interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the Palestinian delegation headed by PLO Executive Committee member Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] has asked Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa to intervene to obtain the U.S. letter of guarantee to end the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, including Arab Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip and to stop building settlements before the conference is convened.

The Palestinian official pointed out that the PLO received an urgent report from the Palestinian delegation an hour after the talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker concluded, the day before yesterday.

Sha'th revealed the existence of just two options for Palestinian representation: representation through an independent delegation, which is what the PLO prefers; or representation through a joint Jordanian [and Palestinian] delegation. He ruled out the possibility of forming a joint Arab delegation to participate in the peace conference, indicating that such a solution is not a possibility at all.

'Arafat's political adviser stressed the need to send an official invitation to the PLO to attend the conference and to fly the Palestinian flag at the venue for the negotiations. He pointed out that there are Palestinian-Soviet consultations, since the Soviet Union is the second party calling for the conference. He cited Abu-Mazin's talks in Moscow and the imminent visit to Tunis by a Soviet delegation headed by the Soviet deputy foreign minister for consultation with 'Arafat.

Sha'th also cited Palestinian consultations with Egypt and Jordan to ensure an improvement of conditions for the conference.

With regard to the expected PLO leadership changes after the Palestine National Council meeting next Monday, he said that these expectations are based on mere tendentious rumors and that no decisions have been announced in this regard.

'Arafat Exchanges Messages With Gorbachev

JN2009163891 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] Brother Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO, has received a message from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

The message was delivered by USSR Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Belonogov when the Palestinian president received him in Tunis yesterday. The meeting was the second since Belonogov's arrival in Tunis last Wednesday.

The PALESTINIAN NEWS AGENCY, WAFA, which made no mention of the substance of the message, reported that brother President Yasir 'Arafat gave the Soviet envoy a reply letter for President Gorbachev. In his letter, brother President Yasir 'Arafat expressed his appreciation of Soviet support for Middle East peace and the Palestinian people's inalienable rights.

Conditions To Attend Peace Conference Stressed

NC2009181991 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 19 Sep 91 p 1, 4

[Report by 'Abd-al-Nabi 'Abd-al-Sattar]

[Excerpt] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat, has stressed that the Palestinians will not participate in the peace conference scheduled for October unless the problem of Arab Jerusalem's representation is resolved, and a U.S. guarantee on the conference's substance is received. In an exclusive statement, Sha'th pointed out that when the Palestinian delegation led by PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, met with Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, it stressed the need to make a concerted effort to obtain a U.S. guarantee on ending the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and on halting the building of settlements before the conference convenes.

Dr. Sha'th said that the Palestinians can be represented in two ways: first, by an independent Palestinian delegation—which the PLO prefers—and second, by a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. He ruled out forming a joint Arab delegation to take part in the peace conference and pointed out that the Palestinian side is holding consultations with Egypt and Jordan to improve the conditions for the conference. [passage omitted]

Delegate: U.S. Letter 'Falls Short' of Demands

JN2009194691 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, Palestinian delegate to the peace talks, has said that the Palestinians have yet to decide whether or not to join the U.S./USSR-sponsored peace conference scheduled for October. They have also not decided on the configuration of the Palestinian delegation to the conference. A decision concerning these two points is to be made by the Palestine National Council, slated to open deliberations in Tunis next Monday.

In remarks to the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY, PETRA, Dr. 'Ashrawi added that the situation, in all its aspects, is being carefully assessed. In Amman today, she discussed with U.S. Secretary of State Baker the letter of assurances he gave the Palestinians in occupied Jerusalem on Monday, Ms. 'Ashrawi said. She called the letter a draft containing certain positive elements but also incorporating certain points that need to be further discussed and amended, and others requiring reformulation. She indicated that, having failed to address some fundamental and substantial aspects, the draft falls short of Palestinian demands. Dr. 'Ashrawi commended President Bush's initiative and his determination to unblock the peace process. She stressed that in the interest of peace the world needs to distance itself from the double standard it applies regarding the Arab-Israeli dispute. Good wishes cannot bring peace; it requires tireless and ceaseless work. Dr. 'Ashrawi noted that another meeting may be held with Mr. Baker to tie up some loose ends.

'Ashrawi Denies 'Commitment' To Peace Talks

NC2309065491 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Text] Hanan 'Ashrawi, member of the Palestinian delegation to the talks with the U.S. secretary of state, has denied any Palestinian commitment to participate in the peace conference. She asserted that the decision has not yet been adopted and that it is up to the Palestine National Council [PNC].

'Ashrawi believes that the Americans are waiting for the outcome of the PNC meetings. If the Palestinian response is positive after that meeting, the peace conference definitely will be held, she said.

In an interview with AL-SAFIR, 'Ashrawi revealed that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has requested a meeting with her in the United States next week to resume their discussion of the U.S. guarantees to the Palestinians.

No Commitment To Attend

NC2309092591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0754 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Text] Beirut, 23 Sep (MENA)—Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, member of the Palestinian delegation to negotiations with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, has said the U.S. secretary asked her and Faysal al-Husayni, the other member of the delegation, to meet him in the United States next week.

In an interview with the Lebanese newspaper AL-SAFIR conducted in Paris and published today, she said the reason for her latest meeting with Baker in Amman was that the PLO Executive Committee and PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat have decided to seek amendments to the letter of assurances, adding that Baker had asked that we receive them in Amman.

She affirmed that there has been progress in the talks with Baker concerning the Palestinian representation, the right to self-determination, and the status of Jerusalem, but described this progress as insufficient and declined to elaborate.

Replying to a question on her view of the Palestinian participation in the peace conference, she said that there is no Palestinian commitment to participation or to the form of participation. Prior to this, she added, the issue of whether or not to participate must be discussed and that the decision on that is up to the Palestine National Council [PNC].

She pointed out that the missing element in the conference is the Palestinian response and that the Americans are awaiting the outcome of the PNC. If there is a positive response, she said, the conference will naturally be convened, adding that if the response is negative, the conference would still be held but would not tackle fundamental issues and or be able to provide stability for the region, because the basic element would be absent.

'Ashrawi said the Jerusalem issue is fundamental to the Palestinians and to the Arab side in general and urged a unified Arab stand on it.

Mahmud 'Abbas Outlines Demands in Cairo Visit

LD2009201191 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] PLO Executive Committee member brother Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] arrived in Cairo last night [19 September] from Amman after a brief visit to Jordan during which he held talks on the Middle East peace process with Jordanian Foreign Minister 'Abdallah al-Nusur. During his visit to Cairo, which is the second in the past two days, brother Abu-Mazin met with the Egyptian first deputy foreign minister and director of the Egyptian President's Office for Political Affairs, Usamah al-Baz.

Brother Abu-Mazin stated in Cairo yesterday that the PLO is insistent on getting the following: Ending the colonization in the occupied territories before the commencement of the peace conference; guarantees by the United States on ending the occupation of those territories; recognition of the Palestinian people's right of self-determination; and a U.S. statement to be issued explaining that the occupied territories also include East Jerusalem.

Official Says Baker Assurances 'Deficient'

JN2109074991 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 21 Sep 91 pp 1, 14

[By Riyad Mansur]

[Text] PLO Executive Committee member Muhammad Milhim has expressed indignation over the failure of international legitimacy, represented by the United Nations, to involve itself in the peace process.

In an exclusive statement to SAWT AL-SHA'B, he said: Since we are talking of Security Council resolutions, particularly Resolution 242, the United Nations must be involved, not disregarded.

Milhim believes that the prospects for the peace process are still bleak because the assurances given by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker are deficient. The reason is that the assurances only reflect U.S. views but fall short of a commitment to put them into effect, he added. He declared that the UN Security Council resolution stipulates that land be exchanged for peace in accordance with international legitimacy. He stated that the United States has neither committed itself to implementing international legitimacy nor even signalled that it will strive to implement it. He added that failure to find just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and continued Israeli occupation of lands will lead the world to a catastrophic war.

Replying to a question, Milhim said: If the United States wants to bring about peace—and I believe that it is serious in its efforts to reach that objective, as shown by the secretary of state's visits—it should put pressure on Israel, using all means to save the region from a fate whose features are still unclear.

The PLO Executive Committee member said that in his visit to Jordan, the U.S. secretary of state said good things about a just and durable peace. The United States must defend its views, because defending views is crucial if the foundations of peace are to be laid in the region, he added.

Milhim went on to say that the Jerusalem issue is a substantive one in the peace process. Hence, it must not be excluded from the process.

Concluding his statement, Milhim said: We are now approaching the date for the Palestine National Council [PNC] meeting, when the Palestinian people will have to decide. He said that the Palestinian factions attending the PNC session will then speak their minds freely and democratically as to whether or not they will attend the peace conference.

Delegation Member Comments on Peace Efforts

JN2109130391 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Telephone interview with Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Arab Studies Center in Jerusalem and member of the Palestinian delegation to talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, in London by Suhayl Khuri in Amman; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Khuri] Mr. Faysal al-Husayni, how do you assess efforts to convene a peace conference following Baker's recent tour of the region?

[Al-Husayni] In light of this tour, the events that are taking place in Washington, the confrontation with the Zionist lobby there, Baker's meetings and confrontation with Congress, and the major events in the Palestinian arena—including the Palestine National Council's [PNC] session—we can say that we are witnessing the most important stage of preparations for the Middle East peace conference. Baker needs Palestinian participation to back his position when he faces Congress. We also need U.S. clarifications to help the PNC adopt the right position and authorize the Palestinian leadership to take the right position on the peace process. We are witnessing very important days, and a word here and a word there may affect the entire peace process. I can say that I am neither optimistic nor pessimistic, but I can also say that the situation is very serious and that everyone is trying to deal with this issue with logic and seriousness.

[Khuri] Mr. Faysal, what is your impression of your recent talks with Secretary of State Baker?

[Al-Husayni] As I told you, these talks were held in the atmosphere I have just mentioned. It is clear that the Americans have reached a certain point at which they fully understood Israel's intransigent position. We believe that it is time for the Americans to take a clearer and franker position toward Israel, at a time when the Americans want us to take a certain step to help start the conference. They also believe that at the beginning of the conference many things will change and that a new mechanism will be created there. There is a tactical dispute over which position should prevail, the Palestinian or the U.S. position. However, I feel that we are in a position to tell the United States that the Palestinian position and the Palestinian presence are very important in any peace process.

[Khuri] Mr. Faysal al-Husayni, only the Palestinian side has yet to announce its position concerning participation in the proposed peace conference. When will the Palestinian side announce its position on this issue and what will the reply be following the recent U.S. letters of assurances?

[Al-Husayni] You know that the PNC will meet the day after tomorrow. The PNC is the highest Palestinian legislative authority, and I believe it is the only side that can authorize the new PLO Executive Committee to give a reply, whether negative or positive. We hope that the United States will be able to meet our demands before or during the conference, so as to be able to say yes, which will mean a real step toward a comprehensive peace in the region.

[Khuri] Mr. Faysal al-Husayni, thank you very much.

[Al-Husayni] Not at all.

Al-Husayni on Representation

NC2209205591 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Interview with Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Arab Studies Society in Jerusalem, by unidentified MBC-TV correspondent in London on 22 September—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Husayni] The Palestinian stand has been constant throughout all these meetings. We have spoken about substance and form. We have said that if the substance of the conference is made more clear, we will be flexible on the delegation's make up. We believe a possibility exists now for the formation of a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation. However, we still need the United States to further clarify some points, and we have asked them to do that. We prefer an independent Palestinian delegation.

[Correspondent] Following the U.S. assurances and on the assumption that the conference will eventually convene, what do you expect the Palestinians to achieve in the conference on the occupied West Bank and the Gaza strip?

[Al-Husayni] The right to self-determination on the Palestinian national soil and the formation of a Palestinian state. Because of the nature, size, population, and location of this state, we expect some sort of confederation with Jordan.

[Correspondent] Can we ask about the background to the meeting between Dr. 'Ashrawi and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, especially because it was held following a hand-writtten message from Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] to Dr. 'Ashrawi?

[Al-Husayni] For a long time the Americans have asked us to go to Amman as a signal of the beginning of a kind of movement toward the formation of a Palestinian-Jordanian delegation. The Palestinian answer has been that such a step should come on orders from the PLO alone. Following his confrontation in the Congress with the Zionist lobby, Baker sent us signals through several states, including the Soviet Union, asking us to take this step to support the U.S. Administration's stand before the U.S. Congress. In view of this and under certain circumstances, assurances, and conditions, President Yasir 'Arafat sent a letter to Mrs. Hanan 'Ashrawi asking her to go Amman to hand Baker a letter from 'Arafat and to receive an answer to this letter. In the letter, we said that the Palestinian-Jordanian delegation is under discussion but that we need more U.S. assurances.

[Correspondent] Is it true that Dr. 'Ashrawi received a letter from Baker? What did it say?

[Al-Husayni] Dr. 'Ashrawi received two things: First, a verbal message from Baker, which I cannot discuss here. We can speak about it only with the Palestinian leadership. This message could be submitted in one way or another to the Palestine National Council. The other thing she received was a letter of assurances, to which the Americans introduced some amendments. We found that some progress had been made but not enough.

[Correspondent] Since you are from Jerusalem, does your participation in the negotiations or in the conference mean that Jerusalem has become a subject of negotiations?

[Al-Husayni] From the Palestinian viewpoint, east Jerusalem is part of the occupied territories and Israel must withdraw from it. The Israelis have a different stand. We are trying to rally all forces and mobilize other parties to the negotiations to support our viewpoint through decisions taken before the conference.

[Correspondent] One last question: Will the peace conference be held without the Palestinians, thereby causing the Palestinians to lose an historic opportunity?

[Al-Husayni] Several conferences, including a regional conference, could be held. However, no conference designed to bring a comprehensive peace to the region can be held without Palestinian participation. Any agreements that ignore the Palestinians and the Palestinian issue will fail. Consequently, there will be no stability in the Middle East without a resolution of the Palestinian issue, and no conference leading to stability can be held without Palestinian participation.

Al-Husayni Visit to Tunis Denied

LD2009181891 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] The PLO's information spokesman has made the following statement [date and place not given]: Some media channels have reported that brother Faysal al-Husayni visited Tunis on Wednesday/Thursday night [18-19 September]. The PLO denies that such a visit has taken place and hopes that the media will be more thorough so that this kind of news does not harm the Palestinian people and their just cause.

Official Denies Resignation of PNC Members

JN2109170991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1650 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Tunis, 21 Sep (INA)—Abu-al-Adib [Salim al-Za'nun], deputy speaker of the Palestine National Council [PNC], has denied media reports on the resignation of a number of PNC members.

In a press statement published here today, Abu-al-Adib said some members have, from the beginning, asked to not be nominated to the PNC membership because of circumstances which the Palestinian leadership was aware of.

The PNC deputy speaker said PNC Speaker Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih enjoys the confidence of everyone, and that there is no truth to reports of his resignation.

Media reports yesterday said the PNC speaker has resigned his post.

Two 'Positive' Baker Proposals Being Studied

NC2109173791 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Nabil Sha'th, adviser to PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, has said that the PLO is studying two positive formulas submitted by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker outside the memorandum of understanding to untie the knot of Palestinian self-determination. Sha'th would not disclose any details of the formulas, but he did say that they constitute good progress in this direction. 'Arafat's adviser stressed that the Palestinians will not go to the peace conference without East Jerusalem representation in the Palestinian delegation and without the Jerusalem issue being on the agenda, adding: However, we do agree to discuss the Jerusalem issue at the end of the peace process.

Leaders of Palestinian groups in Syria today rejected the U.S. proposals on the Middle East peace conference, saying that the proposals ignore all Palestinian aspirations for political self- determination and completely rule out the PLO as the party representing the Palestinians. Three groups, including the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP], came out against the proposals.

DFLP leader Nayif Hawatimah said that 'Arafat is frustrating Palestinian efforts to secure better conditions for establishing peace in the Middle East by financing a rift in his organization. Hawatimah threatened to boycott the Palestine National Council meeting and said that the main personality in the PLO bears full responsibility for financing and protecting the groups that split from the DFLP, the Popular Struggle Front, and the Palestine Liberation Front.

More on 'Positive' Baker Replies

NC2309074191 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Excerpt] Bassam Abu-Sharif, adviser to PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, has said that the replies that the PLO has received from U.S. Secretary of State James Baker on the peace conference and the assurances it requested are positive. He said that the PLO will reply to Baker's new letter after the Palestine National Council, which opens in Algiers tomorrow, concludes its session on 28 September. [passage omitted]

Habash Explains Rejection of U.S. Plan

NC2309064491 Paris AFP in English 0608 GMT 23 Sep 91

[By Lachlan Carmichael]

[Text] Algiers, Sept 23 (AFP)—An influential Palestinian hardliner has categorically rejected a U.S. plan for a Middle East peace conference, saying he would urge Palestinian delegates meeting here this week to vote against it.

George Habash, chairman of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE late Sunday he could persuade the Palestine National Council (PNC) to reject an internationally backed proposal for a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation to the peace conference.

But he conceded that the council—the Palestinian parliament in exile which is set to open Monday at a Mediterranean resort swarming with Algerian security guards and armored vehicles—would probably not issue the categorical rejection that his group seeks.

And, although he sharply criticized Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman Yasir 'Arafat for failures in leadership, Habash vowed to support 'Arafat in the face of foreign enemies.

The PLO chairman said Saturday that recent U.S. assurances on the peace plan were a positive step, but still insufficient for the Palestinians to attend a conference.

In his bungalow at the Club des Pins resort outside Algiers, Habash told AFP and the French newspaper LE MONDE that he objected to the U.S. peace plan because it denied the Palestinians their right to a state.

"The plan asks us to sign (a document) for the liquidation of our cause," said Habash, a veteran supporter of armed struggle against Israel.

The status of Jerusalem, at least a part of which the Palestinians claim as their capital, would be postponed to the second phase of negotiations, he said.

There are no U.S. guarantees for a freeze on Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, he added.

"Palestinian youths didn't throw stones to have us come to this point," Habash said, adding that the U.S. plan calls for three years of Palestinian autonomy and a final solution of a confederation with Jordan.

Such a proposal, he said, was rejected in 1972 by the PLO, of which his group is one of the main factions.

The children of the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories want a state, he added. "They want a flag, a national anthem, a United Nations seat and a passport."

Habash said the U.S. proposal comes at the worst time for the Palestinians—the collapse of their former communist allies and the emergence of the United States as the only superpower.

"I reject categorically and completely the American proposals," Habash said, adding that his group has already begun efforts to have the PNC do the same.

"If we do not succeed in making the other factions agree to our point of view one hundred percent, at least we will try to make the other factions refuse the joint delegation between the PLO and Jordan," he said.

"The joint delegation is the door for the American plan," he said.

If the PNC accepts the U.S. plan, he said his group would withdraw from the PLO Executive Committee, which is like an executive branch of government in exile.

But he said the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine would remain inside the PNC, which he called the Palestinian home.

And while Habash said he would give a speech before the PNC that is critical of 'Arafat's failures—which he called the policy of "free concessions"—he said he would strive to promote Palestinian unity.

"If all the enemy forces want ('Arafat's) head after the Gulf war, we are with him," he said.

Tehran—Palestinians Term U.S. Plan Treasonous

NC2209185891 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Some 93,000 inhabitants of 11 Palestinian camps have signed a document describing the U.S. Middle East peace plan as treasonous. Palestinian leaders in the West Bank and the Gaza strip have shown the document to journalists and told them that the signatures of 180,000 more Palestinians have been collected in Lebanon, Syria, and other areas.

The document described the U.S. Middle East peace plan as an attempt to find a compromise solution at the expense of the Muslim Arab Palestinians. Muslim Palestinians said that the U.S. initiative conflicts with the simplest rights of the Palestinian people.

PLO Faces 'Toughest Political Dilemma'

JN2309080991 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 23 Sep 91 pp 1, 5

[By Lamis K. Andoni in Tunis]

[Text] On the eve of the 20th session of the Palestine National Council (PNC), the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) faces the toughest political dilemma in its history: At stake is its role as the representative of the Palestinian people, which is at risk by either authorising or blocking Palestinian participation in the U.S.-led peace process.

The crucial question that PLO leaders find themselves confronted with for the first time is: Can the organisation's role be sacrificed for the hope of some form of a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict?

The PLO leadership cannot find an easy answer for that tormenting question, but some officials agree that if the suggested conference can lead to an end of the Israeli occupation the PLO's role cannot be allowed to be an obstacle.

Yet so far the PLO leadership has seen no serious signs that by disengaging itself from a direct role it will pave the way for a peaceful solution that will guarantee the minimum Palestinian national rights.

Most officials here fear that by authorising Palestinian participation the PLO will end up undermining its role without getting anywhere close to a settlement of the Palestinian problem.

"If this will be the case the Palestinians will need long years before they can get together another body to claim their national rights," says Fatah Central Committee member Intisar al-Wazir, (Umm- Jihad), who together with her late husband—Khalil al-Wazir, who was assassinated by the Israelis in Tunis in 1988—were two of the co-founders of post-1948 Palestinian national movement.

Consequently there is a strong argument within the Palestinian leadership that if the price of authorising

Palestinian participation will be the representative role of the PLO without the attainment of Palestinian rights, blocking the process will be the lesser evil.

But this assessment, as some PLO officials argue, could be a simplistic way of looking at things and paves the way for more difficult questions: Can the PLO survive further political isolation if it decided to challenge the U.S.-brokered process? More significantly what price will the Palestinian people, particularly in the Israeli-occupied territories, pay for defying the American terms for a peace conference?

Some oficials here are haunted by the example of Iraq—a country which was completely devastated for challenging the U.S. "We have to understand that the balance of power cannot allow for such challenges," said a Fatah official. "Look at Iraq: (PLO Chaiman Yasir) 'Arafat cannot bring down devastation on his people. He has to make the right calculations."

Others disagree. "There is a difference between taking into consideration the balance of power and between total submission to it. If we start by assuming that we have no cards left, that will be the end," argues Dr. Jamil Hilal, head of the PLO information department in Tunis.

But most officials concede that if the PLO emerged as the party that has blocked the peace process, it will not only face further isolation but might lose its ability to rally any kind of Arab or international support against Israeli settlements in the occupied territories or possible Israeli moves to ensure a fait accompli annexation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

At the same time there are strong doubts here that by insisting that Palestinian individuals take part in a joint Jordanian- Palestinian delegation, instead of accepting PLO participation, the U.S. is trying to eliminate the PLO and to avoid the issue of Palestinian national rights.

For many outsiders the issue of representation, or the form of Palestinian participation, seems like a procedural step that should not present an obstacle to peace. But in the Palestinian political mind—as viewed by most PLO officials and many outside the PLO—the issue of Palestinian representation lies at the heart of the national Palestinian struggle.

The PLO is thus viewed as the expression of Palestinian nationalism, rights, self-determination and the Palestinian entity. PLO officials argue that Palestinian national rights were only advanced as such and later recognised after the PLO's establishment and more specifically after it was taken over by the grassroot Palestinian resistance groups in 1969.

Seen in this light, the 1974 Arab summit and later on the United Nations recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people constituted a turning point that transformed the Palestinians, in the eyes of the world, from scattered and displaced refugees into a dispossessed nation entitled to national rights and self-determination.

Many officials here, regardless of whether they support involvement in the peace process or not, fear that if the PLO authorised Palestinian participation at the suggested peace conference without assurances that Palestinian national rights will be addressed, the move will amount to a voluntary reversal of the 1974 Arab and international recognition of Palestinian nationalism.

This argument explains why, over the last week, most groups here put forward the argument that regardless of the form of Palestinian participation, it should be made clear that Palestinians will be represented as a political and national entity at the conference.

"It is clear to us that the option of an independent Palestinian delegation is no longer an option, but we have to find a basis for a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation that does not negate the Palestinian national entity," says one senior PLO official.

This can be done, according to the official, by ensuring that the PLO names the delegation and be the party which will decide the Palestinian negotiating position.

But last week's American insistence that the Palestinian representatives from the occupied territories meet with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in Amman had only reinforced fears here that Washington does not want a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, but is seeking Palestinian participation within a Jordanian delegation.

In political terms, according to PLO officials, such insistence could strip the PLO from its right and political mandate to determine the Palestinian negotiating position.

Initially, all the leadership without exception opposed the idea of sending Faysal al-Husayni or Hanan 'Ashrawi to Amman.

"There is distinction between sending them to Amman as part of coordination between the PLO and Jordan—which is totally acceptable and required—and between American insistence to set the terms for the joint delegation."

The PLO leadership had later to comply under tremendous international pressure, especially when Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev himself sent an urgent message to Mr. 'Arafat asking him to allow Mr. al-Husayni to go to Amman, PLO officials say.

Mr. 'Arafat had made his last-minute decision to send Dr. 'Ashrawi to Amman despite strong objections from his colleagues in the leadership, according to the officials.

The episode, according to PLO officials, did not only expose the PLO's vulnerability to outside pressure but more significantly it highlighted the need for working out a joint strategy with Jordan.

"If we had worked out a joint strategy with Jordan, then Dr. 'Ashrawi's visit or any future such meeting, will have been in accordance with that strategy. We should not allow the Americans the chance to set the terms for the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation," says the senior official.

The problem that Mr. 'Arafat might face at the PNC, however, is that most groups will refuse to make a commitment to a joint delegation but will try to confine the resolutions to a definition of terms of Palestinian participation in the peace process.

But that will nevertheless leave the door open for Mr. 'Arafat to go to Jordan for working out a joint strategy.

PLO officials and Palestinian analysts believe that the most difficult stage will start after the PNC when it will be left for Mr. 'Arafat to decide the specific steps to take towards authorising or blocking Palestinian participation in accordance with the PNC resolutions or terms.

In other words, the PNC, which is scheduled to start today, might give a short breathing space for the PLO chairman by keeping the door open, but sooner than later the PLO leadership will have to come to terms with its historic dilemma.

'Arafat Arrives; Primakov Criticizes Israel

LD2209134191 Algiers Radio Algiers in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Yevgeniy Primakov, the Soviet president's envoy to the Middle East, has announced that Israel's attitudes threaten the convening of the peace conference as scheduled next month. He stressed that Moscow opposes the postponement of this conference. Primakov said that Tel Aviv has not changed its position, despite the pressure exerted on it by Washington, pointing out that the Palestinian side is showing more flexibility to participate in the conference. Israel has gone even further. Its defense minister has announced that Arab leaders would be wrong to believe that the peace conference would lead to Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

On its part, in the first PLO reaction to Baker's recent talks with Palestinians from the occupied territories, a PLO official said that Baker's guarantees are insufficient for PLO participation in the peace conference.

The PLO has yet to decide officially whether to take part in the peace conference. A decision will be made by the Palestine National Council which convenes in Algiers tomorrow.

The Palestinian president, Yasir 'Arafat, arrived in Algiers today to take part in the Palestine National Council meetings. He made no statement on his arrival at Houari Boumedienne International Airport.

Algeria

'Text' of Communique Lifting State of Siege

LD2209233391 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 2200 GMT 22 Sep 91

["Text" of communique released by the President's Office following a meeting of the Higher Security Council on 22 September]

[Text] The Higher Security Council met on 22 September 1991 under the chairmanship of President Chadli Bendjedid. The Higher Security Council conducted an assessment of the situation regarding national security, both concerning public order and the border zones after listening to a report from its secretary as well as statements by the minister of the interior, the minister of national defense, and the head of the government. The introduction of the state of siege was necessary in order to confront an insurrectional situation that was threatening the stability of the institutions and that manifested itself by serious breaches of public order and the security of people and property as well as the functioning of public services. The positive results registered in restoring public order and security have been achieved thanks to the competence, self-denial, and high sense of duty toward the nation with which the units of the People's National Army and their supervisory staff have brought to a situation that was distressing for the citizens and the whole country. The Higher Security Council was also anxious to pay tribute to all the public forces and services as well as to all Algerian men and women for the wisdom and civic spirit that they displayed throughout this ordeal.

At the proposal of the head of the government, the president of the republic decided to lift the state of siege as of 29 September 1991 at 0000 because of the preparations made for the holding of legislative elections in the desired periods of time and at a time when the National People's Assembly is preparing to examine the bills relating to the organization of this election. With a view to giving the country the best protection against the risks of a resurgence of a situation like the one that led to the state of siege, the Higher Security Council advocated the following recommendations: First, a particular vigilance in taking responsibility for the problems linked to the stability of the institutions of the state, to public order, the security of people and property, and the strict observance of the laws of the republic. Second, the introduction of a bill permitting civilian authorities to have recourse to the forces of the People's National Army in exceptional situations that call into question the security of people and property, public order, and the functioning of public services. Third, the introduction of arrangements modifying the law relating to public demonstrations. Finally, the strengthening of the measures taken with a view to ensuring the constant observance of the regulations regarding the movement of people and property on the borders.

Brahimi Notes U.S. Efforts on Peace Conference

LD2309010391 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 2200 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] The situation in the Middle East and the prospects for the holding of the peace conference were tackled by our minister of foreign affairs during the news conference given by his Italian counterpart. Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi said: We appreciate the efforts made by everybody, notably the Americans, to try and get the peace process started.

Concerning the invitation made to the Arab Maghreb Union to take part in a possible peace conference as an observer, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi stated that the decision whether to take part would depend solely on the real sense that was given to such participation.

Italy's de Michelis Discusses Cooperation, Ties

LD2209105691 Algiers APS in Arabic 0915 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Excerpt] Algiers, 22 September 1991, APS—Italian Foreign Minister de Michelis held a news conference at the Mithak residence following talks with his Algerian counterpart, Mr Lakhdar Brahimi. In it, he dealt with bilateral relations in particular but also with a number of international issues.

On bilateral relations, Mr. de Michelis said that the talks centered on economic and political spheres. In this respect, he said: We signed a protocol which we find satisfactory and which represents the concrete results of the talks and bilateral exchanges. It aims at setting up two committees for promoting cooperation between the two countries.

He also added: We talked about the democratic march in Algeria, which he dealt with in his meeting with President Chadli Bendjedid and also with the prime minister, Mr. Ghozali.

Mr. de Michelis also said that he discussed with his Algerian counterpart the meeting of the western Mediterranean countries, Algeria, Italy, Spain, Libya, Morocco, France, Mauritania, Portugal, and Tunisia. The meeting is due to be held in Algeria at the end of October and is expected to give new impetus to bilateral relations between Algeria and Italy, according to Mr. de Michelis.

On international issues, the Italian Foreign Minister explained that he discussed with his Algerian counterpart the peace conference in the Middle East, the problems obstructing its convening, and also the participation of Maghreban countries in it.

As the Palestine National Council meeting approaches, Mr. de Michelis expressed hope that the conferees will take resolutions in favor of the convening of the peace conference and added that [words indistinct] he considers it an important opportunity for all, especially the Israelis and the Palestinians.

On Italy's stance on the peace conference, he said that it is full of hope. "We hope that the Palestine National Council meeting to be held in Algeria will fruitfully lead to a decisive decison to launch the peace conference in the Middle East.

He concluded by saying that the talks also covered the problems that have erupted in Europe and the Arab world following the Gulf crisis. [passage omitted]

Concludes Algiers Visit

LD2209162891 Algiers APS in English 1450 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Algiers, 22 Sep (APS)—Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis left Algiers today, Sunday, after a two-day working visit. During his stay in Algiers, de Michelis held talks with Algerian officials. At a news conference he held at Djenane el-Mithak before leaving Algiers, de Michelis talked about bilateral relations and cooperation between Italy and Algeria, stressing the common will of the two countries to expand the scope of political consultations and to activate the program of economic cooperation drawn up by the two countries. De Michelis said also that the two countries have agreed to appoint a joint working group to prepare a draft for a new cooperation agreement for the period 1992-1994.

Consortium Agrees To Grant $1.1 Billion in Aid

LD2109111191 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1800 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] Eight international banks reached an agreement to grant Algeria a $1.1 billion loan intended to refinance its medium term debts. The offer was put to the Algerian party, in this case the Credit Populaire Algerien [bank], which will present it to the Algerian authorities before going back to Paris for a last meeting, most probably next week. All in all, three decisive meetings spread over some two months were needed for the banks to finalize this project, which was launched more than a year ago.

The bank consortium is headed by the French Credit Lyonnais. APS reports that, according to diplomatic sources in Paris, Algerian and French Government representatives recently outlined the decisions made public by French Finance and Economy Minister Mr. Beregovoy during his visit to Algiers last July. During the talks the two parties expressed their will to settle all the problems so as to boost the Algerian industrial sector and to give a new impetus to trade exchanges between the two countries.

In specific terms Algeria and France agreed on three credit decisions amounting to 7.3 billion francs, and a fourth decision concerning the food and agricultural sector for 1991-92, the amount of which is unknown due to the fluctuations of the market, but it is known that it focuses on 1.2 million tons of cereals and other food products.

Communique Accepts IMF Conditions for Aid

LD2209093291 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] A communique was issued by the prime minister's office. In part, it reads:

The recent meeting the Council of Ministers examined the Economic Minister's report on the implementation of the final agreement signed with the IMF on 3 June. The agreement includes a number of conditions, i.e. obligations imposed upon the Algerian authorities, and stipulates the examination of the suitable means of fulfilment, i.e. measures for the implementation of such obligations, during the coming periodic meetings between the Algerian authorities and the IMF.

The minister of economy briefed the Council of Ministers on the outcome of his meetings with IMF officials in Washington during his visit between 1-12 September, in order to reach an agreement on such conditions before final notification.

The government noted the decisions made at this meeting. They are decisions which ought to be implemented. They will be conveyed to the concerned bodies as soon as possible.

The government will also inform the public on the content of these decisions and their repercussions, given the obligations they carry.

The government's communique also pointed out that at the recent meeting the Council of Ministers examined an initial draft amendment to Law 14/86 regulating hydrocarbon drilling, exploitation, and export ventures.

Out of its commitment to total openness in the field of information, the communique further asserted that the government will be handing over the necessary documents to its partners in society, including the General Union of Algerian Workers and the Organization of Employers and to political circles and public opinion.

The Council of Ministers was also briefed on preparations under way to draw up the 1992 budget law.

Bendjedid Receives UAE Presidential Advisor

LD2009144291 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 19 Sep 91

[Text] Before we go into the details of our main news headlines we would like to mention the meeting which was held today between President Chadli Bendjedid and Mani' Sa'id al-'Utaybah, advisor to the UAE president, who conveyed to the head of state a written message from Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan.

On leaving the presidential residence at Sidi Ferruch, Sa'id Al-'Utaybah made a statement to the television in which he said:

[Begin al-'Utaybah recording] First, I am glad that his excellency the president received me because I conveyed to him a fraternal message from His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the UAE, concerning the strong and fraternal cooperation between the two fraternal countries. This meeting was only a link in the chain of consultations between the two Arab leaders in this serious Arab and international situation, which requires everyone to exchange views with his brothers in all matters of concern to their respective countries and to the Arab nation.

Hunger Strike Complications for Madani, Belhadj

NC2109065991 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic
17 Sep 91 pp 1,9

[Excerpt] [Islamic Salvation Front, FIS, leader] Shaykh Abbassi Madani is facing certain death because of his hunger strike and a stomach hemorrhage. [FIS Deputy Chief] Shaykh Ali Belhadj's health also deteriorated. The latter was admitted to 'Ayn al-Na'jah Hospital after he went on a hunger strike.

In a telephone conversation with the family of Shaykh Abbassi Madani, they told us that starting last Friday, all the detainees' families went on hunger strikes in solidarity with the detainees. The detainees' families also staged a sit-in at Ibn Badis Mosque in al-Qubbah. [passage omitted]

Disagreements Mar Nonpolitical Groups Session

LD2209161191 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in Arabic Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Excerpt] The first meeting of nonpolitical organizations convened at Aurassi Hotel. The meeting was characterized by a great deal of confusion, which went as far as verbal altercations and walkouts from the meeting hall. Colleague Jahida Khalfaoui attended the meeting and sent us the following report.

[Begin Khalfaoui recording] The meeting was opened by a speech delivered by Oueld Abassa, president of the Algerian Doctors Union and chairman of the Foreign Affairs committee of the Algerian National Assembly, in which he spoke of the conditions under which this meeting, the first of its kind, was being held. This preparatory session, which directly followed the meetings between the government and the parties, stemmed from the prime minister's determination to arrange a meeting between the government and nonpolitical organizations.

He was followed by one of the participants in the meeting who presented the agenda and the draft bylaws, which consisted of 13 articles. Then a discussion of the bylaws followed. Speakers objected to the system of work during the meeting and the way the bureau set up to conduct the meeting was formed. Some organizations called for the formation of the bureau through free elections and then for it to be approved.

We then noticed that a series of interpolations pertaining to the system prevented the meeting from progressing so much so that so far, the conferees have been unable to begin their work. Some organizations preferred to withdraw justifying this by their desire not to participate in this political maneuver, as they called it. These organizations included: the Society for the Defense of Peasants in the Eastern sector, the Union of Free Peasants, the Society of Peasants, the Society of Youth Brethren Union, and the National Union of Public Sector Contractors. It is worth mentioning that the meeting was characterized by confusion, improvisation, bad organization, and lack of understanding among the organizations.

Finally, it was agreed to vote by a show of hands on a proposal endorsing the bureau of the meeting. But it was difficult to count the votes because of the anarchy that prevailed in the meeting hall and no majority was attained. Confusion increased when everybody stood up and verbal altercations took place among the protagonists and antagonists of the bureau. All protested at the presence of Oueld Abbassa at the head of the bureau. They denounced the way the work of the meeting was being conducted. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Egypt

Mubarak Views Regional, Domestic Issues

PM2009102291 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT
AL-DUWALI in Arabic 19 Sep 91 p 5

[Interview with President Muhammad Husni Mubarak by Chief Editor Dr. Muhammad al-Rumayhi in Cairo on 18 September]

[Text] [Al-Rumayhi] Mr. President, first, I want to thank you on behalf of the Kuwaiti press for agreeing to give this interview. I will begin right away with my first question, which is about Egypt's role throughout the calamity of Kuwait's invasion. It was a deep role embracing the will to liberate and to provide political and moral support. Egyptian-Kuwaiti relations have now assumed a special character and are today crowned by the visit to Egypt of His Royal Highness Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah. Could you talk to us about this special character, as you see it?

[Mubarak] I will begin, first, by welcoming my brother, Amir Shaykh Jabir. He is a friend whom I have known since he was heir apparent. In fact, I have had some very logical and reasonable discussions with him. I have had contacts with his highness the amir both before and after relations between the two countries were restored. I find him a valiant man who has never failed to support Egypt in any circumstance, whenever we need him. Second, Kuwait is a friendly and fraternal Arab country. Our relations with Kuwait are deep-rooted and go back a long way, to before oil was discovered there. I recall that when

I was in the Air Force I visited Kuwait in March 1958. I spent one night there. It was in Ramadan as far as I can remember. The late Amir Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah invited us to a fast-breaking dinner. We really nurture every affection and friendship toward Kuwait. We have many sons there. They have lived and worked with the Kuwaiti people. This has created a very strong bond between the Kuwaiti and Egyptian peoples. This is something we will never forget. Therefore, we could not fail to react to that catastrophe, which we did not expect and never imagined would occur under any circumstance. We were given assurances—they are denying them now—that no one would commit an aggression against anyone and that no state would commit an aggression against any other state. I mentioned this frequently in my speeches.

[Al-Rumayhi] Mr. President, you personally played a part in trying to stop the Iraqi regime's deviation and lust for violence. This began immediately before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Could you acquaint our readers with that role, what your views were, and what promises were made?

[Mubarak] I have mentioned these promises many times, but they were distorted in Iraq and Jordan. These promises were given to me, to King Fahd, the custodian of the two holy mosques, and to several heads of state. The promises were that there was no intention to commit an aggression. This confirmed what President Saddam Husayn told the Rabat summit conference and the Arab lawyers bureau. I never imagined that what happened would indeed happen. When I inquired about his troop movements before the invasion, he said to me, "I will not do anything. This is enough. But those who returned from the Arab League meeting said that he said he would do nothing until the meeting. Then they said that the meeting was a matter of protocol! Well, if the meeting was merely a matter of protocol, not doing anything meant not doing anything. In other words, these were just excuses." [quotation marks as published]

That, regrettably, was the situation, and I do not want to repeat it again because it was really sad and regrettable because the Iraqi people are Arab people and Kuwait is an Arab state.

[Al-Rumayhi] There has been much diverse talk over the past few months about security in the Gulf region. There was the Damascus Declaration and then there were peripheral Arab discussions on the same subject. Could you tell us about the Egyptian position on the question of security in the Gulf region?

[Mubarak] Our view of Gulf security is steadfast and does not change. This security stems from the Gulf states themselves. No foreign state must impose anything on the Gulf states. They are independent sovereign states and they are members of the Arab League and the United Nations. This must be respected. It is the Gulf states that must decide what they need for their security. On the basis of what the Gulf states themselves decide, and under the umbrella of joint Arab defense, we should help them in this. There is also the Damascus Declaration. This declaration does not mean that I would send forces to any Gulf states without reason, but if any state needs it, we would not fail to do so. When an aggression was committed against Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia asked us to send forces, we did not hesitate to do so. We did not make excuses or look for pretexts. We proceeded from a pan-Arab duty that dictated our participation in the liberation of Kuwait, because the occupation of an Arab state by another Arab state sets a grave precedent. That is why I say that Gulf security must stem from the Gulf itself.

[Al-Rumayhi] Mr. President, the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait caused a major rift in inter-Arab relations and the future of these relations. The Iraqi regime still persists in its wrongdoing. The fact that it has still not released the Kuwaiti, Arab, and foreign POW's and detainees proves that. Could the continuation of that regime within the Arab system create the possibility of dealing with it in the future, or is there a definite position regarding that regime because of what it did?

[Mubarak] With all due respect to our Arab people of Iraq, whom we pity for the conditions they are experiencing—we cannot be unfair to people—I cannot deal with that reigme after all that has happened and after the attack and the denials. It made an agreement with me and then broke it and claimed that I had said what I did not say, and "one or two others" unfortunately made the same claims. I say "no." We do not operate in the dark. "I do not like to work under the table." I speak openly. I said what I said from the outset, when I realized that a "turning of tables" was involved. I spoke out and said, here is the truth. Nobody could deny that truth until "their" white paper appeared and turned the table upside down. I was really stunned. I could not believe that there were people in the Arab world who would turn facts around 180 degrees, but that is what happened.

[Al-Rumayhi] Mr. President, what, in Egypt's view, is the way out of the current situation? Are there any foundations that could be relied upon in the future to mend the Arab rift?

[Mubarak] If we want to look to the future, that would be a good thing, but there is no such thing as "letting bygones by bygones." We must sit down and come to some understanding about what has happened and whether it could happen again. Whoever has made a mistake must admit his mistake. "Let us not fool one another." Let us not do what some states did when the coup against Gorbachev occurred. They expressed congratulations on the coup, and then when it failed they said that nobody spoke on their behalf. I do not like a two-faced policy. We want to sit down, consider what happened, arrive at a complete assessment of the situation, identify the mistakes and the reasons for what happened, and learn a lesson from that for the future. However, a policy of letting bygones be bygones and closing the file with all the catastrophes and problems and "with those who erred emerging later as heroes and playing havoc with the Arab situation" would mean that they would very likely plot again.

[Al-Rumayhi] Some analysts, particularly Western and Arab analysts, attribute what happened to the lack of democracy in some Arab countries. Do you see a link between the two?

[Mubarak] That could be one of the causes, but the occupation of one state by another goes beyond the question of democracy. This is a matter of leadership intentions, when they want to keep a tight grip on their people. Could I invade and take over a state? I am really stunned by what happened.

[Al-Rumayhi] Mr. President, a new world order is emerging, especially with the end of the two superpowers era. How do you, and Egypt, envisage the Arab role in this emergent new world order?

[Mubarak] The Arab role as it is now is very bad. All the Arabs are losers. The Arabs are devouring one another. Foreign states from outside the Arab region will have ambitions in the Arab world. The Arabs must wake up and reassess their position in order to be able to discern their future. There must be a sound Arab vision.

[Al-Rumayhi] Could this begin with a new Arab summit conference, for example?

[Mubarak] What has been studied and researched should be submitted to the summit. The summit leaders are not technicians. There must be studies and proposals at a lower level, that is, from the level of technicians to the level of foreign ministers, and every foreign minister should then go back to his government. That would be a good preparation for the summit.

[Al-Rumayhi] Mr. President, you personally have long played a prominent part in driving the Middle East peace wheel forward toward a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Where is this wheel now?

[Mubarak] Everyone is now working for the conference, which we hope will actually convene. There is some hope that it will. It would be a very big step if the parties concerned sat down around a table and the dialogue and discussions started on the entire issue. All parties must realize that there must be concessions without prejudice to sovereignty. Of course, Israel must respond because peace deserves far more importance than territory. Security is no longer assured through added territory because there are missiles and other things. That is how we should view peace. When we achieve peace, all parties will benefit greatly, including Israel. In fact, Israel will be the one to benefit most in the region.

[Al-Rumayhi] Mr. President, has the problem of Palestinian representation at the conference been solved?

[Mubarak] We are discusssing that matter. The U.S. secretary of state is here today. We hope that the parties concerned will arrive at an acceptable formula for Palestinian representation.

[Al-Rumayhi] Mr. President, it is clear from recent U.S. stances that President Bush's administration is determined to push the peace wheel forward. Do you have an overview of the Israeli position, at least until now?

[Mubarak] I cannot say much about the Israeli position except that they have refused to stop building settlements and are announcing that they will build anywhere—which does not help peace and has angered the United States. Of course, peace is in the interests of Israel, the Arabs, Europe, and the United States. And I previously proposed that a halt on building settlements coincide with a halt on the Arab boycotting of Israel.

Our brothers in the Gulf agreed... and so did the others, but no one wanted to announce it. Why? Only 35 percent of the territories remain without settlements, and the boycott is practically nonexistent. There is no boycott at all of the companies dealing with Israel.

Israel understands this. We Arabs, however, do not understand that in order to protect the remaining part of the territories which will be taken. [sentence as published]

Do we allow them to build settlements so that they can finish off the rest of the territories? That would mean that the talks would be more violent and complicated.

Are we not supposed to be realistic and practical? Is it because it is Egypt that proposed it? Anyhow, they are free. We are trying to help and to propose a solution to the issue, and Israel is saying: No, I will not stop. In practice, Israel is continuing to build while there is no boycott. Tell me one company that deals with Israel and does not deal with the Arab world. All companies operate under their own names or under other companies' names, and the states know that. I do not know what we are afraid of.

[Al-Rumayhi] Mr. President, there are major development concerns in Egypt, and the aim of the visit to Egypt by Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates, was to explore agricultural progress in Egypt. May we hear from you, Mr. President, about the major development enterprises in Egypt as you see them today?

[Mubarak] We are proceeding with development, and any development involves enterprises because it needs financing and so on. Despite this, however, we are continuing development. You have only to consider the Cairo-Alexandria desert road. Anyone who has not seen it for 10 years will not believe it. That is the desert road. Every year I feel there is a change. All the lands beyond the pyramids area and as far as Alexandria are now under cultivation. Shaykh Zayid saw this for himself. And I personally have seen new things... a new large area planted with fruits, vegetables, and trees. In fact there are companies working on large areas. All fields are irrigated by ground water. There are huge pumps and vast cultivated areas in the hills. There are complete farms which include crops, cattle, dairy products, agricultural and animal products and animal feed factories. There is a huge complex all along the desert road, which is now totally different from what it used to be. It is no longer called the desert road, but rather the green road.

[Al-Rumayhi] Mr. President, am I to understand from this that there are now fewer obstacles to Arab investment in Egypt?

[Mubarak] Whoever says that there are obstacles actually means procrastination. We have removed many obstacles, but some people have been making excuses and demands that they would not be able to make in another country. Some say that there is bureaucracy in Egypt... What bureaucracy?

We now give plots of land to anyone who wants to buy in the newly reclaimed areas. Bureaucracy exists in all states of the world—and even uglier than the bureaucracy that exists here. As for the investment field, the process is very easy. Bureaucracy exists in the United States and Britain. And as long as there are money and a government, there is bureaucracy... papers and documents are a must.

We have industrial projects—500 factories in the 10 Ramadan City. So where is the bureaucracy? And 150 factories in the 6 October City... And these are all new cities in the desert. The new Burj al-'Arab contains some 100 factories or more. The new al-Salihiyah contains an agricultural-industrial complex... The new Bani Suwayf, the new al-Minya, the new al-Nubariyah, and al-'Ubur City is being built... New agricultural and industrial complexes... Thirteen cities, seven of which we have completed. There is, for example, al-Sadat City—an industrial and agricultural city which is full of projects. Would all this have been achieved in 10 years if there had been bureaucracy? It would have taken 100 years.

[Al-Rumayhi] Your excellency the president undoubtedly knows that one of the most important factors of success for capital is the human element. Is there any overview of how to benefit from the Egyptian human element in the Arab states, especially the Gulf states, in an organized manner that will protect the various parties' interests?

[Mubarak] We are training our Egyptian workers in the various fields that the Arab region requires. We are proceeding with training and making great strides. I believe that our Egyptian workers have no links with the political system in any country they go to, nor do they intervene in it. Have you in Kuwait and the Gulf ever heard of a single Egyptian conspiring against the regime in the country?

It is very unlikely, unless he is a renegade. On the contrary: The Egyptians, if they work in another country, always protect it and do not interfere in its political system. And if something unexpected occurs in the country and the country needs them, they stand by it. We have examples which I will not mention. The Egyptian can never stand against the country that feeds him. He cannot betray... impossible... This is the Egyptian's nature.

[Al-Rumayhi] Mr. President, there is talk about some politically extremist movements which hide behind certain ideologies.

[Mubarak] In Egypt or in the world as a whole?

[Al-Rumayhi] In the Arab region and Egypt. So is any consideration being given at least to trying to curb this extremism?

[Mubarak] This extremism exists throughout the world... Islamic, Jewish, and Christian... and in the United States. The Arab world is no exception. We are tackling this issue through enlightenment and education... through advice and steadfastness... We use all this to resist extremism.

[Al-Rumayhi] Mr. President, perhaps your coming visit to Moscow is the first visit by an Arab leader since recent events in August. And it is important with regard to talking about Egypt, the Arabs, and their relations with the Soviet Union. Is it possible for the Arab reader to know your views in this regard?

[Mubarak] I congratulated them in Moscow following the aborted coup. Then they invited me to visit them, so I decided to visit and congratulate them and talk about some positions and then return to Cairo. I would like to say that when the coup occurred and I saw the Soviets in the streets, I said that the coup would fail... as long as the peoples have made a move... period. Before that, coups occurred in Moscow but no one moved. It is Gorbachev who opened the door for them. It is he who gave them freedom. It is he who is achieving openness. But the country's conditions were terrible. Gorbachev has done a great deal and brought benefits to the Soviet Union. If a coup had occurred and Gorbachev had been removed from power, nobody knows what would have happened to the Soviet Union after that.

Freedoms are the safety valve. The end of a dictatorial regime is bad. Under a democratic system and freedoms no one fears anything, because it deals with the people and the people have freedom and a free press that says whatever it wants.

True, freedoms and democracies are difficult for the rulers and easier for the people, whereas dictatorships are difficult for the people and easier for the rulers. I prefer that it be difficult for me and easier for the people. This has always been our system in Egypt.

[Al-Rumayhi] Mr. President, my final question is about culture in Egypt. Many of the setbacks that occur in the Arab world are linked to the most important sector—the culture and information sector. Over the past 10 years culture has been characterized by pluralism and a diversity of views. Egyptian culture has developed substantially over the years under your sponsorship. What are Egypt's plans to take care of Egyptian and Arab culture in the future?

[Mubarak] Our culture and information are moving along parallel lines that we are constantly developing so as to match conditions. In the information field television is open and provides many dialogues—technical, scientific, and economic. And we have a satellite channel received by Europe, Africa, and the Soviet Union. The Gulf region receives it, too. On it we transmit all that concerns the world, Arabs, and Egyptians abroad. The culture aspect here is advanced. There is great development in art, literature, and the theater.

[Al-Rumayhi] Mr. President, we thank you very much for this interview. We have taken up a great deal of your time, especially since I know that you are very busy with state business and meetings.

[Mubarak] Thank you. And I wish the Kuwaiti people and the Kuwaiti leadership every progress and stability. God willing, today (yesterday), Wednesday, we will receive our brother the amir, toward whom we harbor special respect. And I would like you to convey my greetings and respect to his highness the heir apparent, Shaykh Sa'd.

[Al-Rumayhi] Thank you again, Mr. President.

Musa Departs for UN General Assembly Meeting

NC2109064191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0610 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Excerpt] Cairo, 21 Sep (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa left Cairo for New York early this morning to lead Egypt's delegation to the UN General Assembly session.

In a pre-departure statement, Musa said he will deliver Egypt's statement before the assembly on Monday, 23 September. The statement will touch on the various international issues, world changes, the ongoing efforts to hold the peace conference, and Egypt's call to declare the Middle East a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction. [passage omitted]

Musa Confident PNC Debates Will Be 'Effective'

NC2309082191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0752 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 23 Sep (MENA)—Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has expressed his confidence that the Palestine National Council [PNC] debates will be so effective that they will lead to the full implementation of the principle of land for peace and will preserve the Palestinian people's rights in the framework of resilience and consideration of the current international circumstances.

In a statement to the Abu Dhabi newspaper AL-ITTIHAD today, he noted that these international circumstances will develop further and that therefore, the peace process and negotiations must be expedited because this is an opportunity that might not recur.

According to the UNITED ARAB EMIRATES NEWS AGENCY, the foreign minister said Egypt is in daily contact with the Palestinian people and their leaders. He added that the Palestinian representation is fundamental to the peace process, because the issue is essentially one of conflict between Israel and the Palestinians.

Al-Jihad Terrorists Captured, Interrogated

NC2109074191 Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I in Arabic 19 Sep 91 p 11

[Excerpt] The Supreme State Security Prosecution currently is interrogating 19 defendants involved in the al-Jihad dissident, terrorist case. The terrorist cell is led by a leading figure in the al-Jihad Organization. The prosecution detained 13 of the defendants pending investigation.

Investigations have revealed that the members of the terrorist group had prepared plans to assassinate a number of officials and public figures. Photographs of the targets were found hung on the walls of the group's dens, according to their rank in the leadership structure. Investigations also have revealed that the organization members own a local-made weapons cache intended for criminal activity. The defendants also possessed leaflets which aimed to incite the citizenry, urging them to disturb the peace, resist authority, and commit sabotage.

The defendants had planned to rob a goldsmith shop to finance their activities. A State Security Investigation Bureau team discovered with the defendants forged identification cards and passports intended to help them escape from the country if they were put in danger or if their plans were uncovered.

The state prosecution charged 13 of the defendants with possessing explosives and detonators for sabotage and to disturb public peace and order. They also were charged with forging official documents and conspiring to assassinate public figures.

The State Security Investigation Bureau team had apprehended the organization's members in Cairo, al-Jizah, and other parts of the Republic following reports that a released al-Jihad Organization member, who had been arrested in connection with the 1984 al-Jihad Organization case, had set up a terrorist group to assassinate a number of public figures. The investigating team found leaflets urging a change in the regime and demanding the assassination of a number of officials.

The organization members were arrested while preparing explosive devices. They possessed large quantities of highly explosive material, a handbook explaining how make and use hand grenades, catalogs, maps, and charts explaining procedures for assembling and dismantling bombs, in addition to recorded cassettes of lectures and orations attacking and denouncing the regime and urging the assassination of significant government figures.

A security source has told the AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I editor that the explosives that were seized are highly volatile and very carefully developed by trained professionals. [passage omitted]

Morocco

Filali Discusses Western Sahara Developments

LD2109004391 Rabat MAP in English 1339 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] Rabat, Sep.20 (MAP)—Morocco will tolerate no infiltration and no attempt threatening its sovereignty, Moroccan Minister of State in Charge of Foreign Affairs Abdellatif Filali told newsmen here Thursday. At a meeting with the National Union of the Moroccan Press (SNPM) the head of the Moroccan diplomacy said that Sahara borders are well known and have been confirmed by a report of the UN secretary general and inside these borders there are no borders other than those of Morocco. Filali added that when Morocco saw there were infiltrations, it did what it had to do, on grounds of the natural and political situation and considering that it can in no way tolerate Polisario infiltrations or presence on the Moroccan soil. The security wall, built by the Moroccan Armed Forces, does not stand for frontiers, said the minister, it is only part of the Kingdom's defense strategy which has always been based on legitimate defense. Concerning the Sahrawis entitled to vote in the projected referendum, he explained the Spanish census of 1974 was accepted by Morocco only as a starting point. Our position, he said, is based on the fact that Spanish colonisation in the south occupied a region stretching from Tarfaya to Mauritanian borders. When Morocco after negotiations with Spain recovered the Tarfaya region and then Ifni and after events in the then-nonliberated regions of Laayun, thousands of people had to flee to the liberated regions, he explained. Hence, he added, the Spanish census which was conducted on political considerations cannot be considered as the only basis. Moroccan position in this respect will not change, the kingdom is rightfully requiring the identification of those who will take part in the referendum before starting it, he added.

"Morocco asks the UN to implement what has been agreed upon. It was agreed that the list of those who claim the right to vote be published, but there has been a delay concerning the UN commission", Filali said adding the "administration will remain on the spot when the special representative of the UN secretary general organizes the referendum and guarantees its credibility."

"If the referendum process is carried out in conformity with what has been agreed upon, there will be no change concerning the Moroccan presence in the Sahara and the return to the criterion that constitutes the basis", Filali went on. On the stand of some bodies and organisms which try to interfere in the referendum issue under the cover of observers, the Moroccan foreign minister pointed out that "the interlocutor of Morocco is the UN and that pursuant to the decision of the UN Security council, the United Nations are alone answerable for the settlement of the conflict."

"No other party is entitled to intervene and nothing in the secretary general's report allows it", Filali said regretting that the European Parliament has interferred in this affair. "We expect it to act positively and without bias within the clear framework of the UN mission', he added. Filali recalled the failure of the the Organization of African Unity (OAU) "which made several mistakes and contradictions" explaining that when this organization proclaimed self-rule, it self-decided on paper losing any possibility of action to make up for errors. On the position of some Spanish media, Filali said they do not have a comprehensive vision and are lacking responsibility and objectivity. He noted the good sense of the Spanish foreign minister's statement concerning Moroccan-Spanish relations saying they are above any problem including the Sahara issue. On the latest visit of (?Manz) to Morocco, Filali said it was a prospective visit which was not part of his mission.

Questions on Tazmamart Penal Colony Viewed

LD2309011791 Paris Radio France International in French 1830 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Excerpts] Human rights in Morocco: Committees of opponents are calling for an international inquiry to shed all possible light on this dossier. The decision was made following the closing of the Tazmamart penal colony and the release of several dozen prisoners.

(Ahmed Benani), a political expert and representative of the Committee for the Struggle Against Repression in Morocco in Switzerland, explains. Monique Masse has just contacted him on the phone:

[Begin (Benani) recording] Thus, Morocco is the kingdom of rumor and lies. At any rate, in recent months they have not stopped denying the existence of the Tazmamart center and, as if to prove themselves right a posteriori, it was announced to us recently that this secret detention center has reportedly been razed to the ground. We do not wish to remain in this vagueness, and we understand the distress and confusion of the prisoners' families. With this in mind, we decided to send an international mission of inquiry, composed of 12 nongovernmental organizations—three of them from the United States—to question the Moroccan authorities, on the one hand, on the fate of men whom we have a (?list) of and some of whom disappeared nearly 20 years ago and, on the other, on the existence of camps of people who have disappeared. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Let us return now to the reports that Lieutenant (Touil), one of the officers held at Tazmamart penal colony, has allegedly been freed. (Ahmed Benani's) committee of struggle was behind this report, which we gave you on an unconfirmed basis last night. [passage omitted]

We will go back to (Ahmed Benani), still speaking to Monique Masse:

[Begin (Benani) recording] The only piece of information I have—and I can confirm it to you as there was some doubt about it yesterday—is the notification which has been made to Mrs. (Touil) on the release of her husband, and I would point out that release does not mean that this is effective at the current time. [passage omitted]

The only certainty is this notification sent to Mrs. (Touil), a notification about which U.S. authorities are aware. One can even say that they obtained the release of Lt. (Touil), on the one hand, because his wife is American and, on the other, because it would seem that the U.S. Administration set this as a condition on the eve of the official trip by Hassan II to the United States on 26 September. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Sudan

Names of Alleged Conspirators Revealed

EA2009194491 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1430 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] The newspaper AL-QUWWAT AL-MUSALLAHAH disclosed more details today on the recent coup attempt which was aimed at Sudan and its revolution. Abd-al-Rahman Abdullah Nuqdallah from the Umma Party leadership was among the prominent politicians involved in it.

The newspaper said that the list of military personnel who were affiliated to the alliance included Major General Muhammad Uthman Halifi and Brigadier Ilmi al-Tijani. AL-QUWWAT AL-MUSALLAHAH also revealed that among those who took part in the planning of the conspiracy from outside Sudan were Brigadier Abd-al-Aziz Khalid, Colonel Isam Mirghani, and Colonel Haydar [word indistinct]. Brigadier al-Rashid 'Abdallah and Police Brigadier Muhammad Uthman al-Zubayr managed to escape from Sudan before the security organs carried out the arrests.

Meanwhile, AL-QUWWAT AL-MUSALLAHAH [passage indistinct] the Mengistu regime which pledged to assist the conspirators with aircraft, but its fall disrupted their conspiracy. The evil group was sure that the implementation of the conspiracy was impossible to stage from the town of [words indistinct] in the Eastern state. [passage indistinct] and the dropping of forces belonging to the rebel movement [words indistinct] and Sudanese tanks in the eastern state by using helicopters which the routed Mengistu regime had promised to provide before its elimination.

Al-Bashir Returns From Visit to Indonesia

EA2209171091 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 1315 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Lieutenant General Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council and the Council of Ministers, returned to Khartoum at dawn today from Jakarta following an official visit to Indonesia of several days. During the visit Lt. Gen. Umar al-Bashir met and held talks with President Suharto on bilateral cooperation. A number of agreements were signed in the context of bilateral cooperation. Presidents Bashir and Suharto also discussed many issues of joint interest in the Islamic and international spheres.

Khalifah Meets Tribal Representatives From South

EA2209180091 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 1315 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Staff Colonel Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, member of the Revolution Command Council, acting chairman of the political committee, and head of the peace and foreign affairs department, has met a delegation of the Shilluki tribe led by Mr. Luigi Adwok [former Subat provincial commissioner]. During the meeting, current efforts to achieve peace and security in the country were discussed.

Col. Khalifah reiterated that the revolution was persevering in its promotion of the peace operation. He said the next few days would witness further practical steps in this context. He said the government was prepared to negotiate regardless of what happened within the rebel movement. The Shilluki delegation praised the government's efforts to bring about peace.

RCC Chairman Toughens Weapons Law

EA2009185091 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] Lieutenant General Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council and the Council of Ministers, recently signed an amendment to the Weapons, Ammunitions, and Explosives Law. The amendment provides for severe punishment, including execution, for weapons possession or use or for carrying them without permission in areas defined by decree of the head of state.

Visa Requirement for Ethiopians Revoked

EA2109220891 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, deputy chairman of the Revolution Command Council and the Council of Ministers and minister of interior, has issued a decree revoking the requirement for Ethiopian citizens to obtain entry visas beginning 20 September.

A responsible source explained that this decision comes within the framework of furthering Ethiopian-Sudanese relations, affirming that these relations will witness more developments in the coming days. A report from Addis Ababa says that the Ethiopian Government has decided to revoke the requirement of entry visas for Sudanese citizens. These decisions mean that citizens of the two countries may enter each other's countries without first getting an entry visa.

Tunisia

'Arafat—Baker Memo 'Positive' But 'Not Enough'

LD2109175391 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali this afternoon had a meeting in the Carthage Palace with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat in the presence of Messrs. Mohamed Jeri, minister-director of the Presidential Office; Habib Ben Yahia, the foreign minister; and Hakam Bal'awi, member of the Fatah Central Committee.

After the meeting, Mr. Yasir 'Arafat made a statement in which he expressed his happiness at meeting his excellency the president before the convening of the Palestine National Council. He added that he had briefed the president on developments in the Palestinian situation, and what was planned for strengthening the Palestinian course and the Palestinian people's intifadah inside the occupied land.

Abu-'Ammar ['Arafat] referred to the meetings held in Jerusalem and Amman between the Palestinian delegation and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. He pointed out that he had informed President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali about the memo of assurances presented by Baker. He said: We consider this a positive step but it is not enough, because there are still basic points concerning the subject of holy Jerusalem and its representation, the Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian and Arab lands, and the right to self-setermination for the Palestinian people.

In this respect, Abu-'Ammar stressed the need to coordinate steps in order to follow up Arab, Palestinian, and international moves so as to establish a just and lasting peace in which national political rights, which were recognized by international law for the Palestinian people, are taken into consideration.

He concluded his statement by reiterating his thanks to the president for the constant position of Tunisia—the president, government, and people supporting the Palestinian cause. He also expressed the hope to see these good efforts continue in order to establish the Palestinian right and the Arab and Islamic right to Jerusalem.

Alitalia Hijacker Identified as Tunisian National

AU2009090491 Rome ANSA in English 0825 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Excerpt] Tunis, 19 September—All passengers and crew aboard a hijacked Alitalia MD 80 left the plane here this afternoon unharmed as Tunisian police began interrogating a man they named as Hedi Bel Hassen Bouchnak and an unidentified friend.

The Italian flag carrier airline flight AZ 864, which took off from Rome's Leonardo da Vinci International Airport behind schedule at 1448 (1248 GMT), was hijacked at 1513 (1313 GMT) while the MD Super 80, a stretch version of the DC 9, was over the Tyrrhenian, flying over the Sardinian coast. It landed at the Tunis airport shortly before 1700 local time.

According to unofficial accounts here, Hedi Bel Hassen Bouchnak, said to be a Tunisian national, told the crew he had a bomb in his bag but was found by police here to be in possession of no weapon of any kind. The alleged hijacker, said Tunis airport sources, was apparently experiencing difficulties in Italy with his sojourn permit.

Tunisian Interior Minister Abdallah Kallel said the suspect and his unidentified friend were "hard heads" and were being questioned by police.

Among the 130 passengers aboard flight AZ 864 was the Palestine Liberation Organization representative to Rome, Nimr Hammad, his assistant in Rome said. Hammad was flying to Tunis for the Palestinian National Council scheduled to open September 23. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

Velayati Invites Amir To Visit Iran

LD2209200991 London KUNA in Arabic 1748 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] New York, 22 Sep (KUNA)— His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah today received at his residence at the Kuwaiti permanent mission to the United Nations here Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran. During the meeting, which was attended by Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad and Ambassador Muhammad Abu-al-Hasan, Kuwait's permanent representative to the United Nations, they discussed Kuwaiti-Iranian bilateral relations and the means to develop them. They also included in their discussions the issue of the Kuwaiti prisoners of war, on whose release the Iraqi regime is still procrastinating, and the role which Iran could play in securing their release.

In a statement to the Kuwaiti TV mission accompanying the amir on his visit to New York, Dr. Velayati said after the meeting that the Iranian Government attaches great importance to the issue of the Kuwaiti prisoners of war detained by the Iraqi regime. He added that Iran has gone through a bitter experience similar to that currently experienced by Kuwait because of the Iraqi regime's detention of a large group of its citizens, as that regime is still detaining approximately 5,000 Iranian prisoners of war in spite of the fact that more than four years have passed since the end of the war between Iraq and Iran.

Dr. Velayati said that according to talks he held with Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shaykh Salim al-Sabah on the sidelines of the recent Accra meetings: "The Kuwaiti side has conveyed to us the great importance of concentrating efforts on securing the release of the Kuwaiti prisoners of war from the prisons of the Iraqi regime." The Iranian minister expressed his country's readiness to cooperate with the Kuwaiti Government for the sake of putting a quick end to the ordeal of the Kuwaiti prisoners of war. Dr. Velayati said that during the meeting he made a proposal to the Kuwaiti amir to set up a joint Kuwaiti-Iranian committee to develop the various aspects of cooperation between the two countries, adding that his highness the amir agreed to the proposal.

Dr. Velayati said that a new chapter in Kuwaiti-Iranian relations has been opened in the last few months following the end of the ordeal of the occupation of Kuwait. That became manifest in the exchange of visits and the participation of an Iranian team in fighting the fire in the blazing Kuwaiti oil wells.

The Iranian foreign minister pointed out that he conveyed an invitation from President Hashemi-Rafsanjani to his highness the amir of Kuwait to visit Iran, and that the latter welcomed the invitation to visit Iran in the near future.

Signing of Defense Agreement With U.S. Viewed

LD2009145391 London KUNA in Arabic 1255 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Excerpts] Washington, 20 Sep (KUNA)— Kuwait and the United States yesterday signed a historic 10-year agreement on defense cooperation between the two countries. The agreement relates to the defense of the sovereignty and independence of Kuwait from external aggression, and stresses the importance of peace and stability for all the Gulf states.

The agreement was signed on behalf of Kuwait by Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah, the minister of defense, and for the United States by Defense Secretary Dick Cheney, at a special ceremony held at the Pentagon yesterday evening.

During the signing ceremony, the Kuwaiti minister referred to "the continuous imprisonment and detention of Kuwaiti citizens by the Iraqi regime in its prisons and detention centers", and he appealed to "the peace-loving countries to put pressure on this deceitful regime to free all Kuwaiti prisoners and return them to their families, relatives, and country". [passage omitted]

The Kuwaiti defense minister then expressed his appreciation for and the pride of the people and the government of Kuwait in the support the Kuwaiti cause met with from the United States. He said: "As we are signing this agreement, we should not forget the Kuwaiti detainees in the Iraqi prisons and camps. We have made many attempts in order to return them to their families and kin in Kuwait, but the unjust Iraqi regime is still procrastinating and evading the issue of their release." [passage omitted]

In reply to a question on the threat of a new U.S. intervention against Iraq to force it to comply with UN resolutions as a condition for the cease-fire, the Kuwaiti minister said: "Someone like Saddam can only understand the language of force because he has lived by killing and persecuting his people". He pointed to the crimes committed by the Iraqi regime against its people in Halabjah and to the suppression of popular revolutions against it in the north and the south following the liberation of Kuwait. [passage omitted]

The Kuwaiti official did not rule out a return of U.S. forces to the region should an emergency require this. He said that redeployment of forces and equipment in Kuwait and the Gulf states and the use of facilities all aim at bringing peace and security to the Gulf, and are for defense and protection. Therefore, the agreement is not in the interest of Kuwait alone but of all the countries in the region.

Asked whether he feels that the Iraqi regime constitutes a threat to Kuwait and the region because of the weapons of mass destruction in its possession, he said :"It is not Kuwait alone which is threatened by Iraqi weapons of destruction but the entire region. Therefore, the United Nations has a considerable role in putting pressure on the regime of Baghdad and making it comply with all international resolutions. There are more than 13 of these and Iraq is still procrastinating in its implementation of any of them."

To a question on the clauses of the agreement, he said that they aim at establishing a Gulf region where peace reigns; we do not want the likes of Saddam Husayn in the region, he asserted. [passage omitted]

Security Arrangement With Egypt Proposed

NC2109054791 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 18 Sep 91 p 1

[Excerpts] Egyptian-Kuwaiti negotiations begin today during the first visit to Cairo by Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Sabah, who is leading a high-ranking delegation. [passage omitted]

High-ranking diplomatic sources have told AL-AHALI that the Kuwaiti amir carries with him a set of specific proposals on the Damascus agreement, now that Kuwait has agreed to sign a joint security agreement with the United States and is now preparing for similar agreements with France and England. Prominent among these proposals is one suggesting a bilateral security agreement between Egypt and Kuwait. According to such an agreement, Egypt would deploy troops in Kuwaiti territory for a limited period. These troops would be under the strategic command of the Kuwaiti command. Internal regulation, however, would be left for the Egyptian command. [passage omitted]

The sources added that Kuwait will sign a similar agreement with Syria.

AL-AHALI also has learned that Kuwait rejected a proposal by one of the Damascus Declaration signatories before signing an agreement with the United States. According to that proposal, the eight signatories to the Damascus agreement would assist in setting up a huge military force to act as a full-scale army to protect Kuwait. The sources add, however, that certain Kuwaiti officials rejected the proposal to avoid future differences among Arabs and aggravating other Arab parties. Their excuse was that the proposal was sure to disrupt the Kuwaiti demographic balance.

The diplomatic sources add that certain parties have suggested that the Damascus agreement be annulled, since it has become pointless. [passage omitted]

Embassy in UK Refutes Human Rights Charges

LD1809142691 London KUNA in English 1145 GMT 18 Sep 91

[Text] London, 18 Sep (KUNA)—The Kuwaiti Embassy in London today refuted claims by the U.S. Middle East Watch organization, and reaffirmed Kuwait's attachment to human rights and also to the provision of security and stability in the country.

The Kuwaiti Embassy communique, which was issued today, says that His Highness Amir Jabir al-Ahmad and the Kuwaiti Government are fully aware of the tragedies and problems still threatening our country.

The embassy points out that Kuwaiti's infrastructure and main facilities were subjected to destruction greater than anyone can imagine. The communique adds: "Saddam Husayn continues infiltration operations into sovereign Kuwaiti territory, and this has raised new fears among our people about the likelihood of a new clash," and points out that Kuwaiti security is generally under pressure from inside and outside Kuwait.

The embassy warns that incidents related to violation of security and to retaliation occurred during the first few days after the liberation in particular. Notwithstanding, his highness the Kuwaiti heir apparent and prime minister, Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah issued a warning to those who violate Kuwaiti laws, no matter what their nationality. The heir apparent said in very strong words that no Kuwaiti is above these laws. The overwhelming majority of Kuwaitis have adhered to these directives and have shown admirable self-control under very bad conditions.

However, the Kuwaiti Embassy in London points out that under any circumstances there will always be bad elements. The communique says that Kuwait does not have the resources to fully control these elements. However, the communique emphasizes that Kuwait has achieved progress, as the report of the Middle East Watch organization admits and further progress has been achieved since the conclusion of the fact-finding operation which was carried out to prepare the report.

As for the issue of torture, the communique points out that Kuwait is committd to investigating any such incidents reported to the Kuwaiti authorities. The embassy expresses its conviction that the aim of the Kuwaiti Government is to deal with criminals fairly and humanely.

The embassy points out that the best proof on this is the fact that the Kuwaiti authorities allowed the television team which prepared the "BBC Television, Panorama" program to see all the facts. The program was broadcast on 5 August 1991. This documentary showed that the prison in which interviews took place was clean and enjoyed good hygiene and humane conditions. The communique points out that in spite of this, it should be made clear that the Kuwaiti authorities did not choose that prison in particular for the preparation of this program.

The Kuwaiti Embassy says that the issue of the so-called sudden deportations is delicate. The first point to be explained is that Kuwait, facing the reconstruction operation, needs numerous skills and wide experiences on a large scale. Therefore, Kuwait has behaved wisely by not engaging in speedy deportation operations which could lead to the loss of these valuable human elements.

The embassy adds: The second point is the fact that Kuwait is not in a position to withstand the financial burden of unproductive foreign workers, especially as these individuals came to Kuwait in order to achieve financial gain, and they were allowed to enter the country and given work permits on the basis that they had work to do.

The communique says that if those people are jobless as a result of the war, they have to leave Kuwait in accordance with the law, thus following to a certain extent the example of the case of immigrant workers in Europe.

The embassy points out that Kuwait had in the past followed a more lenient policy in this respect, a luxury no longer available at the present time.

On the same topic, the communique explains that the case of Palestinian residents in Kuwait also requires some clarification, and that only the files of the Kuwaiti Interior Ministry mention these Palestinians who had come to the country with travel documents, not normal passports. The number of Palestinians who were welcomed to Kuwait at any time varies between 30-35,000. However, the embassy also recalls that out of 296,000 people with Jordanian passports registered in August 1990, the greatest majority had identified themselves as Palestinians. Among this latter part of the population, about 180,000 left Kuwait of their own accord during the period of the invasion. At a later stage, 30,000 people applied to obtain their end of service dues and will leave Kuwait after they have received their financial settlements.

As to Palestinians without a nationality, the communique stresses that the only people who have been resettled among this group are convicted criminals who have been deported to their country of birth, as is indicated in their travelling documents, or to any other country of their own choice.

Regarding the Middle East Watch report claims that there are cases of deportees left in the desert, the communique says that it is true that there a few such people who were deported to such places but they were not left there, as their provisional destinations were either Al-'Abdali or Safwan, where the United Nations had set up provisional camps for those fleeing from the butcher of Baghdad.

The statement stresses that those deported by the Kuwaiti authorities were Iraqis who were considered persona non grata by the Kuwaiti Government. They are naturally on their way to Iraq or to any other country they chose.

The statement makes clear that if the Middle East Watch Organization has any queries about this matter, we can refer to the International Red Cross Organisation, which supervises this operation.

The statement goes on to say that the problem of the "Without" [any nationality] is as disturbing to the Kuwaiti Government as it is to the Middle East Watch Organization. The Kuwaiti Embassy stresses that Kuwait has decisive evidences that Iraq had infilterators within this group, and actually a large number of them had been arrested. It is clear, the statement says, that this constitutes a serious threat to the security of Kuwait, and therefore the subject attracts a great deal of attention in the discussions of the Kuwaiti government.

The statement affirms that Kuwait has accomplished great achievements. Acts of violence in the streets have declined and the government has succeded in providing food supplies, electricity and telephone network services. Also, two thirds of the oil wells set ablaze within Saddam Husayn's crimes, have been extinguished. This has reduced a massive environmental threat to the entire region. The Kuwaiti Embassy says that Kuwait is still facing great pressure on its meager resources, and has faced great threats to its internal security. However, it has managed to reopen schools and is still struggling for the release of the thousands of Kuwaiti sons still detained in Iraq.

Yemen

Foreign Minister Calls for End to Iraqi Blockade

EA2209221191 Aden Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani said the continuing economic blockade on Iraq is no longer justifiable and should end at once, noting that the need for the remaining UN Resolutions is totally questionable, because Iraq is implementing them.

In a press interview conducted by the Yemeni news agency, SABA', Dr. al-Iryani said Yemen is doing all it can to return the situation to normal with regard to relations with the brothers and said that it seeks only regional security, safety, and stability. He added that Yemen's policy during the Gulf crisis was clear and firm and has not changed, for it did not at all support the occupation of others' territories by force or problem solving by force. Yemen voted for more than one UN resolution condemning the occupation of Kuwait.

He added that the Yemeni Republic and other states, specifically Arab ones, had opinions on the way to overcome that crisis. He also added that during the Gulf crisis, doubts, delusions, and accusations were abundant and a great deal was said about Yemen and its intentions and stand; but the end, Yemen strove for a peaceful solution that spared Kuwait destruction and spared Iraq greater destruction.

Regarding the American initiative for a Mideast peace conference, the brother foreign minister explained that the achievement of peace on the basis of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 is the Arab demand over which there is disagreement.

Dr. al-Iryani affirmed that unity and democracy in Yemen are inseparable and that each of them exists concurrently and is strengthened by the other's existence, pointing out that Yemeni unity has been and is still accepted with international interest and admiration, particularly in view of the method and bases on which unity was founded.

Spate of Political Assassinations Predicted

PM1809113691 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 15 Sep 91 pp 1, 6

[Fadyah al-Zu'bi report: "Al-Jawi Says: We Have Entered Period of Political Assassinations"]

[Text] Kuwait—'Umar al-Jawi, head of the secretariat of the Yemeni Unionist Grouping Preparatory Committee and presidential adviser, emphasized that "the assassination attempt against him last Tuesday, which resulted in the martyrdom of Hasan al-Huraybi, one of the grouping's leaders, was not motivated by revenge, tribal factors, or personal disagreements, as some papers have said." He told SAWT AL-KUWAYT by telephone that his party "is demanding that the state be established on the basis of democracy and in accordance with the Constitution, laws, and new legislation." He added: "We have personal disagreements with no one. There are differences in views among the parties over what path we we can follow in the future, but they are not bloody differences that lead to assassination."

He emphasized that the assassination was a "political assassination" and that "it was directed against the democratic movement in the country and the unionists in particular. Therefore we regard it as the beginning of a series of political assassinations. This is why the parties, associations, and unions condemned it, urged the authorities to arrest the perpetrators, and formed a committee to follow up the outcome."

He said: The House of Representatives too formed a follow-up committee, condemned the assassination, and demanded the promulgation of a law on the acquisition of firearms in the country. Al-Jawi added: The committees formed will continue to follow the investigations, especially since they regarded Martyr Hasan al-Huraybi as the first martyr for the struggle for democracy. Al-Jawi refused to accuse anyone, saying that "the parties, unions, and associations are following the case." But he emphasized that "murderers are enemies of unity and democracy, and the grouping is currently studying their links with states outside Yemen." He said: "We are aware of the danger that these assassinations pose for the future, and we are studying them carefully and thoroughly so that we do not get lost." He said that "what happened on Tuesday is the beginning of further political assassinations, to which the people's uprising and present demonstrations demand an end."

Al-Jawi said that prominent political, party, and unionist figures attended Martyr Hasan al-Huraybi's funeral.

He said that demonstrations swept all Yemeni cities the day before yesterday (Friday); that they were staged in Aden, al-Hudaydah, Ibb and all Yemeni areas; and that they will continue today for some days to follow.

'Umar al-Jawi said that what he sensed from the people's movement reflects not a state of alarm, but, rather, a state of mobilization designed to confront the series of political assassinations.

He said that on Thursday an attempt was made to storm the home of Mujahid al-Qahali, Nasirite Correct movement leader and a member of the House of Representatives. He added that a meeting is currently being held by the Yemeni parties to follow the developments that the country is experiencing."

Government Ready To Cooperate With Eritrea

EA1909145291 Asmera Voice of the Broad Masses of Eritrea in Tigrinya 0400 GMT 19 Sep 91

[Text] The Government of Yemen has stated its desire to cooperate with the Provisional Government of Eritrea in various fields. This was revealed by the foreign minister of the government, Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, when he met and held talks with the representative of the Provisional Government of Eritrea, Mr. Muhammad Jabra, during the week in Yemen. The minister also noted that his government wants to have a representative in Asmera and also noted that the government is going to send a delegation to visit Eritrea. Finally, the minister asked Mr. Muhammad Jabra to pass the congratulations of his government to the people and the Provisional Government of Eritrea.

Reportage Regarding Recent UN Resolutions

Envoy Addresses UNSC on 706

JN2309060891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1950 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] United Nations, 22 Sep (INA)—The UN Security Council held a session last Thursday to approve a new draft resolution against Iraq concerning oil.

The INA correspondent in New York said that 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, Iraq's permanent envoy to the United Nations, delivered a speech at the beginning of the session during which he said: The Council is today debating a draft resolution aimed at implementing its Resolution 706 of 15 August 1991 in light of the report submitted by his excellency the secretary general on 4 September, which he prepared in accordance with Paragraph 5 of the said resolution.

He went on to say: The gaps and contradictions I pointed out in Resolution 706 in my speech before the Council on 15 August 1991 apply automatically to the draft resolution now before you, to the extent that the latter seeks the implementation of a resolution lacking the bases for its implementation. Therefore, I need not repeat the observations I made about Resolution 706, and here I would limit myself to reminding the esteemed Council that just as in the case of Resolution 706, it states a concern to implement the recommendations of the executive envoy of the UN secretary general with respect to deteriorating economic conditions in Iraq, and expresses alarm over the health conditions of the Iraqi people. In actual fact, it consolidates the economic blockade against Iraq and entrenches the measures of the boycott committee that has in numerous cases shown itself to be powerless to make the appropriate decisions to approve Iraq's importation of basic civilian goods under Paragraph 20 of Resolution 667 [number as received].

Al-Anbari added: In fact, one fears that Resolution 706 and the draft resolution presented to you will render the deterioration of the health and living conditions of the Iraqi people a political card to exercise pressure on Iraq and will show it as a country that does not care about its people's suffering, as if the inhumane blockade imposed on Iraq has been imposed and maintained by the Government of Iraq, and not by the UN Security Council and the committee set up in accordance with Resolution 661 of 1990. In violation of Paragraph 20 of Resolution 687, the said resolution and the draft resolution want to provide money for the reparations fund and the expenses of the agencies, organizations, employees, and experts whose number is increasing by the day and who are being appointed to tighten the economic blockade imposed on Iraq and implement the other UN Security Council resolutions.

A careful reading of Resolution 706 and the present draft resolution would show that with the resolution and the draft resolution Iraq is left with two equally unpalatable resolutions. The first seeks to retain the total economic blockade with all that it entails in suffering for the Iraqi people. The second seeks a limited relief from the blockade in return for Iraq's acquiescence in surrendering its sovereignty over its oil resources and its acquiescence in certain members of the Council controlling Iraq's oil resources through UN agencies and thus keeping them from being developed and industrialized. Worse, the second choice practically means retaining indefinitely the economic blockade, contrary to Resolution 661 and 687, and giving the Iraqi people access to meager basic commodities simply to ward off famine and death, far from securing a decent quality of life or developing its economy and advancing its society.

Al-Anbari said: Even if Iraq opts for the latter option, the resolution's mechanism, conditions, and restrictions it imposes on the importation of Iraqi oil and Iraq's importation of basic civilian materials will render the resolution impractical and unfeasible. Therefore, it is not ruled out that some UN Security Council member states realize well that the resolution is practically impossible to implement. However, they only want to acquit themselves of their legal, political, and humanitarian responsibilities resulting from maintaining the siege on the Iraqi people. They also want to evade the pressures of the world public opinion and the international humanitarian organizations, and to shift responsibility for that to Iraq itself.

He added that if this is the objective of some Council member states, then it reflects the extent of political hypocrisy reached by some states that claim to be concerned for human rights and the right to life at a time when they continue to effectively tamper with the souls of the Iraqi people in such a dishonest manner to achieve suspect political purposes.

'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbar added: Having explained Iraq's principled viewpoint, allow me to point out some technical problems in the draft resolution.

The draft resolution approves only some of the paragraphs contained in the report of his excellency the secretary general. Having done so, it does not provide flexibility, but creates a state of vacuum and chaos for any operation to import Iraqi oil or for Iraq to import basic civilian materials.

Authorizing the secretary general to do whatever is necessary to implement the draft resolution after its approval will not be sufficient to avoid the danger referred to.

Regarding the operative paragraphs of the draft, we have the following remarks:

Paragraph 1 keeps the sum at $1.6 billion and ignores the recommendation of the executive envoy of the secretary general, which, as a minimum requirement, calls for raising that sum by $800 million. This confirms that, even in emergency cases, some Council member states are eager to keep the noose around Iraq or to maintain their control of its fate.

As for Paragraph 2 of the draft, it does not take into consideration the fact that oil marketing contracts usually stipulate giving the buyer a grace period ranging between 2-4 months as of the date of shipping the oil. Therefore, there will be no funds available to meet any of the requirements of Resolution 706 throughout the noted period, even if all paragraphs of this resolution have been followed.

Al-Anbari added: The resolution and the draft resolution do not allow Iraq to sell its oil in the free market. This will result in reducing oil prices and undermining stability in the oil market.

Iraq's envoy said: By endorsing Paragraph 57D and Paragraph 58 of the secretary general's report, Paragraph 3 of the draft resolution allows illegitimate interference in a bilateral agreement between Iraq and Turkey with regard to the flow of Iraqi oil via Turkish territory. It also tampers with the costs agreed on by the two countries and the methods of payment. Paragraph 3 of the draft resolution ignores the costs of production, transport of the oil within Iraqi territory, and the costs of maintenance work on the production and transporting sites in Iraq.

Al-Anbari said: By endorsing Paragraph 58 of the report, Paragraph 3 of the draft resolution constitutes unjustified, void, and illegal interference in the terms of oil selling contracts. This paragraph also defines—without any practical reason—the Turkish port as the only outlet by which to export Iraqi oil, regardless of the economic costs of this outlet compared with the other available outlets for Iraqi oil, whether via Jordan or the Gulf.

Iraq's permanent envoy to the United Nations said: Paragraph 6 of the same draft resolution grants diplomatic immunity to all those working in accordance with the paragraphs of the draft resolution, regardless of the level of their jobs and responsibilities; it also grants them absolute freedom of movement on Iraqi territory. This reflects the Council's disregard of Iraqi laws and international treaties with regard to sovereignty and diplomatic immunity.

Concluding his speech, Iraq's permanent envoy to the United Nations said: Mr. President, the draft resolution, which calls for holding continuous consultations between the committee formed in accordance with Resolution 661 and Iraq to facilitate the exportation of Iraq's oil, intentionally ignores the need for these consultations with regard to Iraq's ability to import basic civilian goods. Consequently, the draft resolution gives any member state of the committee the power not to approve or to veto Iraq's importation of any basic civilian goods, except food and medicine. Such differentiation in procedure between Iraq's exportation of oil and its importation of basic civilian goods reiterates the dangers I pointed out at the outset of my speech and exposes the real objectives of Resolution 706 and the objectives of the draft presented before you today. Thank you.

706 'Impossible' To Implement

JN2009174691 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Excerpts] Despite the ongoing debate between the Security Council's permanent members and Iraq over international inspection helicopters, the Security Council decided yesterday to allow Iraq to resume its oil exports for the first time since the outbreak of the Gulf crisis. [passage omitted]

Iraq's UN representative 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari commented on the resolution.

[Begin al-Anbari recording in English] It was not really intended, basically, to alleviate the hardship which the Iraqi population is going through because of the total sanction, total boycott against Iraq, but rather to collect money for the purpose of compensation and for other purposes which are alien to the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people. And the mechanisms are such as to really make the implementation of the resolution impossible to do. And the next few days would prove our point, that really the mechanism, the obstacle, the restrictions, the bureaucracy, and the red tape, which are imposed in every word of that resolution, which would make it impossible to market Iraqi oil. [end recording]

Ramadan Condemns Resolution 712

PM2309092891 Paris LE FIGARO in French 23 Sep 91 p 6

[Interview with Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan by Remi Favret in Baghdad on 21 September]

[Text] Baghdad—[Favret] You have criticized the conditions set by Resolution 712, which has just been adopted by the UN Security Council. Will you oppose its implementation?

[Ramadan] It is a shameful resolution, shameful chiefly for France, which proposed it. It is inconceivable for France—which waves the banner of freedom and human rights—to ask the United Nations to sell Iraq's oil and to come and distribute medical and food aid in our country while keeping part of the money for other purposes. The extremely dirty face of French colonialism is reappearing here.

Did French politicians believe for one moment that the Iraqi people could accept such a plan? Do they believe that the Iraqi people are made up of shepherds and cattle farmers? We are a people with a very ancient history. We would rather die than become beggars.

[Favret] But what can Iraq do, after all that has happened, to oppose the UN decisions?

[Ramadan] Under cover of international law, some countries—and, first and foremost, the United States and Britain—are committing a crime that will be recorded in history forever. The imposition of the embargo on Iraq and its continuation until now under such conditions have nothing to do with international law. Iraq does not want aid: It wants to sell its oil in order to feed its people, and it has been denied this. It is not an embargo but the genocide of 18 million Iraqis.

[Favret] Why do you find France's proposal so surprising?

[Ramadan] We were for a long time France's door to the Near East. Now it vies with the United States in harming the Iraqis, as though the Mitterrand government wanted to outdo Bush in the genocide of our people. France will gain nothing apart from a bad reputation. We did not imagine that the Zionist lobby was so much in control of France.

[Favret] What is your response to the UN demands concerning the use of its helicopters to inspect Iraq's nuclear, biological, and chemical installations?

[Ramadan] We consider these demands suspect. They are the subject of correspondence between us and the United Nations.

Readiness To Cooperate Stressed

JN2309100291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0918 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Text] New York, 23 Sep (INA)—Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn has stressed Iraq's absolute eagerness to cooperate with the UN Security Council and international organizations. At the same time, he stressed Iraq's sovereignty and national security.

Ahmad Husayn said this following a meeting at dawn today, Baghdad time, with French Ambassador Jean-Bernard Merimee, the UN Security Council president for this month.

An INA correspondent in New York said that the minister informed the UN Security Council president of Iraq's cooperation with international organizations and the Security Council in particular, because Iraq is part of the international community.

Ahmad Husayn said that Iraq will continue to cooperate with the United Nations concerning the tasks of the UN inspectors, but he stressed that Iraq alone is responsible for its sovereignty and national security.

IAEA Denounces Baghdad

AU2009173991 Paris AFP in English 1714 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] Vienna, Sept 20 (AFP)—The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) strongly denounced Iraq on Friday for resisting agency efforts to inspect Iraqi nuclear installations.

Iraq tried repeatedly on the last day of an IAEA general conference here to block the vote but the resolution was adopted with 71 votes in favor, only Iraq against and seven abstentions.

The conference, the highest IAEA body, "deplored" Iraq's failure to comply with its obligation to open up installations for IAEA inspection.

The agency said it was "deeply concerned" by Iraq's continuing efforts to block United Nations Security Resolutions 687 and 707, voted after the Gulf war.

The resolutions charged the IAEA with responsibility for the detection, destruction and removal or neutralization of any equipment or material in Iraq that could be used to manufacture nuclear weapons.

Conference delegates asked IAEA general director Hans Blix of Sweden to report back to the next IAEA general conference here in September of next year on any progress in applying the two Security Council resolutions.

Blix told a news conference that stopping Iraq from secretly rebuilding a program to enrich uranium, necessary to make an atomic bomb, must become a top priority.

A fifth IAEA mission is now in Iraq to search for nuclear-related equipment while a sixth IAEA inspection team is to arrive in Baghdad on Saturday.

The sixth special team of experts will be sent to Baghdad on Saturday to investigate what happened to an alleged shipment of heavy water to Iraq in 1980, an IAEA spokesman said Friday.

Though not scheduled, this latest inspection was decided on after a country which the spokesman said had requested anonymity told the IAEA it had delivered several hundred kilograms of heavy water in 1980 for recooling in the Iraqi nuclear reactor in Osirak. The reactor was destroyed in a 1981 Israeli raid.

The spokesman said such deliveries are to be reported to the IAEA only if they exceed 10 tonnes.

But the mission wants to know if Iraq resold the water, stocked it or used it for other purposes. The experts also want to find the reactor's twin plant, since Iraq has said that each nuclear installation had its double in case one of them was destroyed, according to the spokesman. He said Iraq has so far refused to disclose its whereabouts.

Blix said the Iraqi experience was proof that the monitoring system to uncover secret nuclear sites must be strengthened.

While recommending monitoring by satellite and intelligence, Blix warned that inspections merely based on information by these means should not be launched without a critical approach.

Participants in the conference agreed that safety at nuclear plants must be boosted but no agreement was reached on the necessity of an international convention including binding safety standards, informed sources said.

Aging nuclear power plants in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Hungary have caused concern among IAEA members and Western assistance will be needed to dramatically reduce safety hazards.

Some 40 anti-nuclear activists, from Greenpeace and the ecological group Global 2000, staged a protest outside conference headquarters at the Hofburg on Friday.

Some 15 of them chained themselves together with handcuffs and aluminum tubes to try to block delegates from entering the building. Police detained 32 of them after using wirecutters to break up the group.

Demonstrators called on the IAEA to review its statutes so as to turn the agency into an organization favoring a nuclear energy phaseout.

Foreign Minister Criticizes U.S. 'Threats'

JN2109150491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1445 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Amman, 21 Sep (INA)—Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn has criticized the U.S. threats to use force against Iraq if it does not allow UN helicopters to fly over Iraqi territory.

In a press statement before leaving Amman today for New York to attend the UN General Assembly meetings, Husayn said this was not the first time the United States has made threats against Iraq's security and territorial integrity. He pointed out that the threats have been repeated many times for various and fabricated reasons.

Ahmad Husayn stressed that Iraq has cooperated with the various inspection teams and has offered them all available resources to facilitate their mission. He said the original request, which Iraq had agreed to, was the use of Iraqi helicopters.

Ahmad Husayn said flying the UN flag on the inspection helicopters is not enough to assure Iraq of its security and territorial integrity.

Regarding the conditions set by the UN Security Council concerning the export of Iraqi oil, the foreign minister said: If the UN Security Council wants to meet our humanitarian needs, then the conditions it sets do not achieve that objective. He stressed that the resolution does not respond to the urgent humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people, which were included in the report submitted by the UN envoy, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan.

Ahmad Husayn said that while he is in New York he will meet with a number of foreign ministers within the context of Iraq's declared policy to conduct talks with everyone.

Editorial Protests U.S. 'Insolent Threats'

JN2109085691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0725 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Baghdad, 21 Sep (INA)—The newspaper AL-'IRAQ states that the hostile acts and deeds the United States is engaging in to undermine Iraq's sovereignty and dignity must be firmly confronted. Likewise, their ill-intentioned objectives must be exposed to the international community, the paper adds.

In an editorial today, the paper says: Once again, the United States unleashes a flood of insolent threats against Iraq, using flimsy excuses and pretexts and claiming that the Iraqi Government is not cooperating with UN inspection committees. The latter runs counter to statements by committee members, as they have praised the Iraqi authorities' full cooperation and sincere responsiveness to help the committees perform their duties as spelled out in Security Council and other UN resolutions.

The paper goes on to say: Iraq responds to and cooperates with the United Nations in the implementation of all international resolutions. However, the United States construes a single remark on how resolutions can be implemented as a disavowal of commitments requiring that Iraq be confronted by military force.

AL-'IRAQ says that the U.S. Administration goes to the limit in its epithets to falsely characterize Iraq just because it makes a remark on the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions, though the remark is in line with the essence and content of these resolutions. The paper says that through this unceasing and unjust campaign against Iraq, the United States shows itself to the world as a country that practices infinite tyranny, commits war crimes, and exposes the lives and fate of 18 million people to death through the imposition of an unjust economic blockade unprecedented in history.

Bush's 'Reckless Approach' Viewed

JN2109131591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0736 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Baghdad, 21 Sep (INA)—The newspaper AL-QADISIYAH states that the reckless approach being used by Bush in his handling of trivial as well as important issues regarding the implementation of Security Council resolutions shows that he does not have the sanity to befit the president of "a superpower" and also that he is jeopardizing regional and world security as a result of his sick and evil whims.

In an editorial published today under the headline "Bush Is Giving Vent to His Rancor Against Iraq and Promoting an Outrageous Aggression Against Its People," the paper adds: Bush's disgraceful conduct proves that the chapters of the U.S. conspiracy against Iraq have not yet been concluded. He made insolent statements in this regard when he depicted himself as one who enjoys custodianship over Iraq and its people and blatantly interfered in their political choices.

The paper goes on to say: Bush's obsession with aggression has not even allowed him to wait until the issue is resolved at the United Nations, considering that the international team is performing tasks assigned by this organization. Similarly, he has failed to take note of Iraq's misgivings. He threatened brutal military aggression and went so far as to prepare the stage for implementing it. As for Washington's propaganda machine, it has begun to beat the drums of war and aggression against Iraq.

The paper indicates that the brutal United States' might has begun to relish aggression against Iraq and its people for no reason, advancing flimsy pretexts and excuses on ridiculous grounds. Likewise, Bush looks as if his only worry and obsession is how to totally finish off Iraq. Hence, this criminal will not hesitate to urgently order a military attack after he has made a fuss and clamor, threatened, and allowed himself to insolently interfere in Iraq's domestic affairs, thus virtually declaring U.S. custodianship over the world and consecrating U.S. hegemony over people around the globe.

AL-QADISIYAH adds: Bush, who has for a long time used the unjust resolutions passed by the American Security Council to justify his excessive and sick hostility toward Iraq, and who, along with his entourage and hirelings, accused Iraq of noncompliance with these resolutions, has of late—after Iraq showed that it is complying with the Security Council resolutions and respecting them fully—begun to look for "minor" details and to fabricate incidents to threaten Iraq and its people with aggression.

The paper points out that the new fabricated U.S. lies, on the use of "foreign" helicopters by a team of "UN inspectors" to inspect arms sites in Iraq, is an example of what we are saying here.

The paper says that the doubts Iraq expressed over this issue are logical and reasonable. The paper adds: These doubts were expressed so that there can be no misunderstanding of other conceivable alternative practical and logical solutions by these "UN inspectors." Iraq expressed its complete preparedness to provide these helicopters to the UN team to make sure that its mission is confined to inspection only, and does not cover other objectives that might undermine Iraq's national sovereignty.

AL-QADISIYAH adds: When faced with this dubious U.S. determination that the "UN team" should use foreign helicopters, Iraq once again expressed its readiness to assign an Iraqi official to accompany this team to make sure that national sovereignty was not violated. Examples of the violations of national sovereignty are the transport of weapons or sensitive photo equipment on board these helicopters. One more thing: the Iraqi official would ensure the safety of the UN team from any incidents that could happen because of the presence of unexploded ordnance dropped by U.S. planes on the inspection sites which are to be visited. Washington could then use such incidents as new pretexts to defame Iraq at international fora, as part of the double standards it is using in its handling of international issues.

The paper indicates that Washington's conspiratorial policy purposefully seeks to fabricate incidents and create one clamor after another to insinuate that Iraq is not complying with international resolutions, while it is covering up for the Zionist entity and supplying it with political excuses and justifications to prevent it from being branded as an outlaw regime that has failed to heed dozens of UN resolutions on the cause of our Palestinian Arab people, who are living under occupation.

AL-QADISIYAH adds that the new U.S. terrorist campaign being unleashed against Iraq and its people by Bush also aims to set the political groundwork for the continuation of the blockade against the Iraqi people, and also to continuously use this blockade as "a card" designed to mortgage the Iraqi people's will because of their humanitarian needs for food and medicine.

Concluding its editorial, AL-QADISIYAH says: This U.S. aggressiveness and these double standards are clear to us. As for their conspiratorial objectives, they are not an enigma to be deciphered. Hence, our ammunition and weapons at this point, to confront Bush's ingrained malice against Iraq, its people, and its historic leadership, lie in the demonstration of continued steadfastness and adherence to our national independence and principles until all chapters of the rancorous conspiracy are defeated.

Helicopter Issue Said Inflated

JN2209123391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0720 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Baghdad, 22 Sep (INA)—AL-QADISIYAH has accused the U.S. Administration of fabricating and inflating the affair involving UN helicopters to justify a new military action against Iraq.

In an article appearing in today's issue, the paper links clamor over the affair to U.S. President George Bush's recent statement that the United States has unfulfilled objectives in Iraq. It is in this light, the paper says, that we understand the magnitude of Washington's fuss over the helicopters, the rejection by Bush and his allies of any consideration of Iraq's sovereignty, and an escalation in the threat of military aggression.

AL-QADISIYAH expresses doubts about the true intentions and objectives of the inspection team's mission. This mission appears suspicious and not confined to the inspection of weapons sites, says the paper.

The paper adds: Not only does Bush want to see the suspect mission implemented, but he also wishes to harm Iraq's national sovereignty and right. This is another objective which he seeks to achieve through the comprehensive conspiracy against Iraq.

AL-QADISIYAH draws attention to the fact that Bush's threats of aggression over the fabricated helicopter affair are associated with the U.S. refusal at the Security Council to increase Iraqi oil sales to meet the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people, needs that have been acknowledged by UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar and his assistant Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan.

Saddam Chairs Ba'th Regional Command Meeting

JN2309115291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1045 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Sep (INA)—President Saddam Husayn, secretary of the Regional Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, this morning chaired a Regional Command meeting.

The command discussed some party action affairs and measures to implement the resolutions of the party's 10th regional congress, the congress of jihad and construction.

Saddam Husayn Article Marks Prophet's Birthday

JN2109144291

[Editorial Report] Baghdad INA in Arabic at 0615 GMT on 21 September carries an approximately 2,500-word report on an article written by President Saddam Husayn on the occasion of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday. The report does not specify in which of the Iraqi papers the article was published. An announcer-read "text" of the article was also carried during the 1030 GMT scheduled newscast of Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network First Program in Arabic, with very poor reception.

Saddam begins his article by saying that God had chosen Muhammad to be His prophet before Muhammad had even reached the age of 40, the age at which he proclaimed that he was God's messenger. "God Almighty chose Muhammad at an early age. He gave him the qualities He wanted to give him, in addition to the qualities he inherited from his noble family," Saddam Husayn says. He adds: "When we view that lesson, we can clearly see the difference between choosing the leading elite in life, society, and the call—an elite which the people charge with the task of bringing radical and comprehensive change—and the ordinary people."

Saddam says the Prophet's faith and inherited qualities may serve as a general law "to ensure that we arrive at what we want and secure the path from those who leave the ranks." He adds: "Therefore, we say that no one should be allowed to emerge in the links of leadership in the Ba'th Party or the state if the first part of that law does not apply to him; namely, that he should come from a good origin and be the branch of a tree which bears good fruit and which can stand up against extremely heavy winds."

Saddam Husayn goes on to review how Islam spread around the world and how Muslims used to choose their leaders. He then reviews the history of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party and the experiences and tests which leading members of the party had to go through. He says: "However, many in the party's rank and file had not gone through such tests. We were denied the opportunity to ensure we had made the right decision when we chose them and gave them our confidence. When the mother of battles came—comprehensive, great, with deep meanings, and all the descriptions used to describe it—it required a new level of faith, awareness, and resilience. Some were shaken, but the majority of men stood firm, especially in the Armed Forces."

He adds: "Thus, we can understand the great meanings—both the incidental and the deliberate—that resulted and are still resulting from the mother of battles, and all the conspiracies and the unfair economic blockade connected with it, as well as the role it will play in the correct application of the leadership conditions on all levels, including the conditions related to founding members of the new parties."

Concluding his article, Saddam Husayn says: "I say that new opportunities to go through tests will be open for everybody. These opportunities are open even now. He who stands at the end of the line can join those who stand at the front if he wants to do so and if he supports this desire with faith, awareness, and jihad."

Press Urges Iran To Opt for Policy of Peace

JN2209125791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0635 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Excerpts] Baghdad, 22 Sep (INA)—Iraqi papers of today were unanimous in their view that Iraq's decision [on 22 September 1980] to retaliate comprehensively to the Iranian aggression was necessary to abort a Zionist-imperialist plot designed to invade Iraq, destroy the pillars of its national strength, and hinder its pan-Arab role.

In their editorials, the papers describe the retaliation as an act of self-defense and a preventive measure to protect the land, people, and identity of Iraq against the Iranian regime's illusions of imposing tutelage on Iraq.

The papers urge Iran's rulers to reconsider their aggressive positions and ambitions and to opt for peace by recalling the outcome and impact of the aggression on the people of Iran. The papers note that the aggression brought tragedy to the Iranian people, damaged Iran's national economy, and opened the door to foreign interference in the region.

AL-THAWRAH, mouthpiece of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, says Iran's aggressive policy and empty arrogance reaped only disasters, painful defeats, and heavy human and material losses.

The paper points out that the danger of Iran's aggressive policies has not yet receded. Experience has shown that the Tehran rulers have neither comprehended the clear lessons nor abandoned their expansionist dreams and aggressive policies. They still insist on the logic of imposing tutelage over the Iraqi people, and they try to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs, says the paper. [passage omitted]

Concluding, AL-THAWRAH says Iran's rulers are today more than ever called upon to stop their repeated cease-fire violations and release thousands of Iraqis still held captive in Iranian prisons.

AL-JUMHURIYAH says Iran's intentions targeted not only Iraq but also many parts of the region. Iran sought to impose trusteeship on Iraq and dominate the Arabian Gulf, and it targeted the Arab nation as far as the Arab Maghreb. [passage omitted]

AL-JUMHURIYAH stresses that for the sake of good neighborliness, and for historical and geographical reasons, Iranian officials should solve problems between the two countries through peaceful means, should abandon their sick desires for domination and expansion, and should seek natural and even-handed relations with Iraq. [passage omitted]

New Prime Minister Sworn In 21 Sep

JN2109165391 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi today took the constitutional oath before leader President Saddam Husayn on the occasion of his assumption of the post of prime minister. The swearing-in ceremony was attended by Hatim Hamdan al-'Azzawi, chief of the Presidential Office.

Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm today took the constitutional oath before leader President Saddam Husayn upon his assumption of the post of deputy chief of the Presidential Office. The swearing-in ceremony was attended by Hatim Hamdan al-'Azzawi, chief of the Presidential Office.

Delegation Denied Visas for Strasbourg Conference

JN2109092991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0840 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Brussels, 21 Sep (INA)—The head of an Iraqi National Assembly delegation has condemned the French authorities' refusal to grant the delegation entry visas to attend the third conference on parliamentary democracy held by the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France. The delegation was invited to attend the conference by the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly. The head of the delegation expressed dissatisfaction because France banned the Iraqi delegation from taking part in the conference, exploiting the fact that the European Parliament's premises are situated on French territory, just as the United States carries out similar measures because the United Nations is headquartered in New York.

Kurdish Families Returning to Karkuk

JN2209121791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1140 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Al-Ta'mim, 22 Sep (INA)—The Kurdish families that left Karkuk and had not been able to return because of the circumstances in the autonomous region's governorates where they lived have begun to return to their homes in the city in an atmosphere of joy and hope.

Al-Ta'mim Governor Hashim Hasan al-Majid said in a press statement that the returning families found all the necesssary facilities to lead a normal life and effectively participate in enhancing the climate of security and stability prevailing in the governorate.

The governor said that the Trade Ministry began distributing food rations to these families. Other families in Karkuk are also providing aid to the returnees, underscoring the spirit of brotherhood and the noble values of Islam, he added.

He said Karkuk, which was and still is a city of fraternal nationalities, is stretching its arms out to the remaining Kurdish families that will arrive in the governorate. There is no ceiling to the number of returnees, and there are no restrictions to their normal life and stability in the city, the governor said.

Kurdish PUK Leader Talabani Interviewed

NC2009164291 Ankara TURKISH DAILY NEWS in English 18 Sep 91 p 1, 11

[Interview with Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, by Ismet G. Imset on 17 September; place not given]

[Text] [Imset] Mr. Talabani, as you were conducting your contacts in Ankara, there was an announcement by Barzani in Baghdad yesterday. He said it was only a matter of days for an agreement with Baghdad to be signed and that many of the issues had been resolved. Do you think this statement, carried by the Iraqi News Agency, reflects the truth?

[Talabani] Nonsense. I don't think it's true. I don't think Barzani said anything like this. You asked Mr. Barzani himself. Did he tell you anything like this? There are still lots of difficulties and obstacles in the way of a final agreement between the Kurds and the Iraqi Government. The final is the Iraqi proposal and is far from meeting the demands of the Kurdish people.

[Imset] Could you specify these obstacles?

[Talabani] The main obstacles are concerning democratization; the Iraqi regime totally refuses to make any kind of change. Second, the so-called obligation asked by the Iraqi regime from the Iraqi Kurdistan Front. And the draft which was published by the Iraqi Government in a Jordanian newspaper is totally unacceptable to the Kurds. We as the PUK [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan] and I think all other partners of the Iraqi Kurdistan Front are rejecting such a kind of obligation. Third, the right of the Kurdish parties and the Iraqi Kurdistan Front to have relations with other parties outside of Iraq was prevented according to the new law published by the so-called Revolutionary Command Council. Also we are insisting that we have the right to contact other parties, organizations, international bodies, human rights groups and etcetera and we will never accept such a presentation by the Iraqi Government. The fourth is the definition of the territory of an autonomous Kurdistan. The Iraqi Government is continuing the policy of Arabization in Karkuk and in Hanefin and Iraq is refusing to add Vilayet Karkuk, Hanefin, Sencar, Mendelin, Shehran and Lahvar to the autonomous Kurdistan. I think no one could accept this. And there are other demands from the Kurdish people, the Iraqi Government is still refusing the right of Kurdish people to participate in the policy of the central government and there is also now the problem of the guarantee for an agreement with the regime. We think that there must be an international guarantee for this agreement with the Iraqi Government while Iraq is refusing all these kinds of guarantees. So there are a lot of obstacles in the way and a number of demands of the Kurdish people signed by all Kurdish leaders including Talabani, Barzani, and the leaders of the other six Kurdish parties are not met by the Iraqi proposal. And unless all these demands which were legitimately adopted by the Iraqi Kurdistan political leadership are accepted, there will be no agreement with the Iraqi regime.

[Imset] And you think this process will take a long time, perhaps months?

[Talabani] I think so. You remember months ago I was telling you the same thing and the Iraqi Government was always making lots of propaganda that it was a matter of days. You see what has happened has proved that I was right and they were wrong.

[Imset] There was a report today in a Turkish newspaper that you had proposed to the PKK [Workers' Party of Kurdistan] a ceasefire with Turkey and also negotiated for the release of Turkish soldiers in their hands. What is the extent of your contacts with this organization and have you truly negotiated?

[Talabani] I think we've been trying for a very long time to convince the PKK to end its actions and we are trying to persuade them to follow a political line—not an armed struggle. But it is up to them to decide. We are trying through friends, with indirect contacts with the PKK, to negotiate.

[Imset] In other words, you have not met or spoken with Osman Ocalan yesterday?

[Talabani] No, Ocalan sent me a letter. I didn't send a reply to it. But there are friends who are in contact with him, the PKK. Through them I sent him a plural message asking him to release the soldiers and his reply was that he was ready to release them to an international body, not directly to Turkish authorities. Secondly, I suggested that they end all kinds of military activities in Iraqi Kurdistan and they promised to do this. In places under our control we cannot permit any activities against Turkish sovereignty.

In our areas of course, we cannot control all the Turkish border but in areas under our control, we will control it and we will never permit anyone to cross the border to Turkey for activities like this. We think there is a huge change all over the world. Now is the time for a new world order, a time for political struggle. Even we in Iraq preferred to enter negotiations with them instead of continuing the war. The time of a popular war is passing now. This is a new era, an era of democratization, of human rights, and the new main line of struggle all over the world for all the people is a political one, through diplomatic ways, through mass struggle, through parliament, through media, through organizations and through political activities and diplomatic activities. Not through guns and artillery and battle. For 30 years we've been revolting in Iraq. On the 11th of this month we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Kurdish revolution: 11 September 1991. It means that we have a long and good experience in this. We think that it is the best way, especially now that there is a social democracy in Turkey which is developing, is to work through democratic lines.

[Imset] Also when I was in Iraq, I was told that you had relayed a message to the PKK on behalf of President Turgut Ozal.

[Talabani] No. On behalf of Jalal Talabani I have. It is my idea and Mr. Abdullah Ocalan knows it very well because I had a very long discussion with him one year ago and in the beginning of this year I met him twice in Damascus. I had a very long discussion with him and I persuaded him to follow this new line to adapt to the new world order. And to work and adapt to activities according to the new world order. And it was not at all in the name of anyone. It was from Jalal Talabani to Abdullah Ocalan. Even after my return (to Iraqi Kurdistan) I will write him a letter... Now the policy of the PKK is far from being a realistic one... I think it is not in the interests of the Kurdish people anywhere.

[Imset] Now that Turkey is on the verge of general elections, with regard to your own relations, what do you think will happen after October 20 if there is a change or not?

[Talabani] You know the policy of the PKK is that it wants to have contacts with the Turkish people, Turkish parties, Turkish media and the Turkish Government. Fortunately we have President Turgut Ozal who understood better than others. And who has, I think, an understanding of the importance of relations between the Kurdish people in Iraq and Turkish people and the Turkish Government. The first time I came to Turkey I came in disguise, you would remember. Then after my departure and when President Ozal announced that I was here, there was a lot of propaganda and many articles, some even condemning the visit.

The next time when I came to Istanbul for the Socialist International meeting, the climate was changing. I was received by Professor Inonu and I was received by His Excellency Suleyman Demirel and I met a lot of people. I think this is the policy of the PUK [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan]. We would like to have contacts with all, the Turkish establishment, government and the president. We are grateful to President Ozal because he received us and he was prepared to understand the importance of this relation and opened the door. I think now everyone understands that Ozal is a man of well-thinking and one who foresees matters and problems. But our policy is to have relations with all.

Kurdish DPK Leader Barzani Interviewed

NC2009161391 Ankara TURKISH DAILY NEWS in English 18 Sep 91 p 11

[Interview with Mas'ud Barzani, leader of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, by Ismet G. Imset in Sardava in Iraqi Kurdistan; date not given]

[Text] [Imset] Could you tell us about the recent situation of the Baghdad talks especially after the Shaklava meeting of the Front and prior to your own visit there?

[Barzani] Our talks in Baghdad are continuing. In fact, they are at the final stages... We have been meeting with political leaders of the Front. There was a unanimous decision to continue the dialogue and to achieve a peaceful solution as the best formula for our people.

[Imset] You say final stages but we hear that there are outstanding problems of vital importance.

[Barzani] As I said, we have not reached a final agreement but we have some working papers and documents and are very close to one. I don't say it is complete, this proposal agreement. I do not say it is complete and it still has certain shortcomings. But, I think we have gone a long way to achieving autonomy. We can benefit from this as Kurds and enjoy security and stability in our region and in the whole of Iraq. The definition on the size of the autonomous region is the sticking point. As far as we are concerned, this is problem. But we have made some progress and some proposals. And, I expect this complexity would be solved also in one way or another. So we are now trying to find ways in order to solve problems.

[Imset] I believe the situation of Karkuk, Baghdad's insistence to keep it out of a future map of autonomous Kurdistan, is one of the major issue.

[Barzani] Karkuk has a special status. It is a multinationality city. There live Kurds, Turkomans and Arabs but no matter what is the composition of the city there is one fact which cannot be denied: Karkuk is situated in Iraqi Kurdistan. Our ultimate aim, our objective, is to see all people, the Turkomans, Arabs and Kurds, enjoy equal rights without any discrimination in the city and to involve themselves in the administration of the city. Especially for all of the Turkomans. We recognize that they should also enjoy their national rights as a minority living in north Iraq.

[Imset] Once an agreement will be reached with Baghdad, what kind of administrative measures will be taken in Kurdistan?

[Barzani] If there is an agreement, definitely there will be an autonomous administration composed of two bodies. The executive council which will be a mini cabinet and the legislative council which will be a mini parliament for the region. There will be free elections in the region to elect these bodies in order to perform its power of authority. There will be no contrast between our administration and the national administration because both will be integrated into the same system. So, this is how we are working on it. Our administration will be integrated into the national system.

[Imset] There appears to be fear among Turkish circles that once Iraqi Kurdistan gets its autonomy, there will be a spreading influence throughout neighboring countries. That this will effect the Kurds elsewhere.

[Barzani] If we reach a settlement, this will effect the Kurds in Turkey and Iraq but I want to make it very clear that it is not our policy to interfere in the Kurdish situation in Turkey or Iran. Of course, there is something: In Turkey there is a Kurdish problem. In Iran there is a Kurdish problem. And their own national movements whether we like them or not. This is not something new, they are there already. In my view, we have come to the conclusion that the Kurdish issue will not be solved through a dictatorship or a military solution.

You cannot suppress all these people everywhere... For us, for the Kurds here after so many years of struggle, I don't think we will be able to resolve our problem through the gun. So, both sides have to come to terms in order to see a viable solution which is acceptable to both sides.

[Imset] Only recently, Turkey staged what it said to be a successful operation against PKK [Workers' Party of Kurdistan] targets in North Iraq. How successful do you think this operation was and would you be able to give casualty figures? Also, we heard that Peshmergas were killed in the attack. What is your view?

[Barzani] Whatever the reasons and motives of the recent Turkish raid be, there is one central fact which is that the victims have been innocent civilian refugees and displaced people. And, we regard it as a violation, in fact an aggression, against our people, innocent people. And, no PKK fighters were even harmed in these attacks.

The victims were displaced refugees and between 40-50 were killed or wounded. I personally was very hurt by this attack and I hope it will not be repeated. The only way to see it not being repeated is for logic to replace military thinking. And that trend would be not to attack our people. It has always been our policy to secure borders between us and Turkey. We have enjoyed good neighborly relations.

We do not want to interfere with Turkey's internal problems but I am afraid that maybe some commanders want to justify their policy and are doing their part, to cover up their policy failure (in Turkey), by attacking civilians.

[Imset] Even during the operation, some officials in Turkey claimed that the Iraqi Kurds were warned or informed prior to the raids. Did you receive any warning or information in advance?

[Barzani] No. I can speak for myself that we were not informed at all. And, they (Turkey) know that we do not harbor PKK bases and they know this for sure. They also know where they (the PKK) are. Why they would prefer to attack refugee centers is not understandable.

[Imset] Also after Turkish attack, we understand that there was also an Iraqi attack, this time concentrated around Karkuk.

[Barzani] Yes there were some clashes but I must make it very clear that it was not by a decision taken by the Front to provoke this. Neither was it an Iraqi government decision. This is not a policy of the Front leadership. What has happened is a spontaneous chaos of fighting and then it developed into a military confrontation.

Then we had to move in very quickly to control the situation. We sent in people to control the situation. Those who were responsible were really provocateurs who started all this mess... Now the situation is normalized.

[Imset] Finally, do you think the amount of aid reaching Iraqi Kurdistan meets the level required?

[Barzani] We really thank Turkey for the assistance it is offering to help this aid come through and for all those governments who are helping us to find international aid. Of course, it has been helpful a great deal but definitely the problem has not been solved. Compared to the amount of aid which is coming, the problem is greater than that and it needs a viable settlement.

Liquid Gas Production Increases Reported

JN2109161491 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 19 Sep 91 p 8

[By Muhammad Jubayr]

[Excerpt] Liquid gas production at the State Enterprise for Gas Industry in the northern area has risen by 50 percent, 10 percent more than planned.

Mr. Fa'iz 'Abdallah Shahin, oil under secretary for production affairs, told this correspondent that there will be no shortage of gas during the next winter season. He said that specialized teams at the State Enterprise for Oil and Gas Industry in the southern region are going all out to increase gas production now that the first line, with an output capacity of 1,500 tonnes, is in operation.

He said the gas produced in the south and the north will meet domestic demand. Despite the unjust blockade against brave Iraq, he added, the Oil Ministry is seeking to reduce the current waiting period for gas distribution by 15 days. [passage omitted]

Reports on Establishment of New Settlement

Shamir's Office: 'Misunderstanding'

TA2209113891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] It is claimed in Jerusalem that the U.S. Jewish organizations' attack on Israel on the settlements issue stems from misunderstanding and misinformation. It is emphasized in the prime minister's bureau that the ceremony the prime minister will attend this week to inaugurate a settlement will be within the boundaries of the State of Israel. Our political correspondent Natan Gutman reports from Jerusalem:

Surprise was expressed in Jerusalem over the U.S. Jewish organizations' attack on Israel on the settlements issue. Nobody is interested in entering a head-on confrontation with these organizations today, especially not in view of the good work they have done on the guarantees issue. At the same time, official political elements made it clear that the whole thing stems from a misunderstanding. According to them, the Jewish organizations leaders were misinformed about the Tzur Yig'al settlement. On Tuesday the prime minister will attend the inauguration ceremony of this settlement, and it is believed in Israel that the United States mistakenly believes that this settlement is located outside the Green Line. This settlement, it is stressed, is located very near the Green Line indeed, but still within the 1967 borders.

Nevertheless, until this storm subsides, contacts on formulating the letter of understandings are continuing. Zalman Shoval, Israel's ambassador to Washington, today met with Denis Ross, Secretary Baker's aide, in an attempt to complete the formulation of this letter before the Levi-Baker meeting on Wednesday.

'Definitely' Inside Green Line

TA2209124491 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] The Prime Minister's Office states that the storm raging around the inauguration of the new Tzur Yig'al settlement is a tempest in a teapot and an unjustifiable attempt to take advantage of a certain event. Our political correspondent Arye Golan reports that through its embassy in Tel Aviv the United States asked that the matter of the new settlement be checked out. The Prime Minister's Office made a thorough check with the Justice Ministry, and it was definitely made clear that the settlement is within the Green Line. The results of the check were relayed to the United States.

In this context, Likud's spokesman Gil Samsonov said that the left in Israel is engaged in a provocation aimed at American ears. He told our party affairs correspondent that the left aims at bringing about a total withdrawal from the territories and is bypassing the Israeli public.

Further Details

TA2209102591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] More on the settlements along the Green Line inside Israel. Our correspondent Shmu'el Tal has learned that approximately 5,700 apartments will be constructed in the six settlements planned along the hills east of the coastal plan.

In the settlement of Tzur Yig'al, which will be inaugurated on 24 September, 529 apartments of two types will be constructed. Several voluntary societies are being organized to purchase these apartments. Our correspondent adds that the largest scope of building will be in the settlement of Mazor, where approximately 2,500 apartments will be built. Another settlement will be Holot Ge'ulim, with approximately 1,100 housing units. The other settlements are Mithamey Yarhiv, Kfar Rut, and Yad Hana. Each of these will comprise approximately 500 housing units.

Netanyahu on Tzur Yig'al

TA2209063591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by Hayim Zissowitz and political correspondent Arye Golan—live]

[Text] [Zissowitz] Good morning, Deputy Foreign Minister Netanyahu.

[Netanyahu] Good morning.

[Zissowitz] Our political correspondent Arye Golan is with me in the studio. First of all, Mr. Netanyahu, have you received an invitation to participate in the inauguration of the new settlement Tzur Yig'al?

[Netanyahu] No, I have not been invited, but I would be happy to go if I were. I am surprised at all the commotion. I understand that there is political opposition—which we reject—to any settlements beyond the Green Line, or in this instance on the Green Line but on the other side. The specific case of Tzur Yiga'l, however, is that of a settlement within the Green Line. In other words, if we are now supposed to get excited about the establishment of settlements or the building of houses within the 1967 borders, you can already understand what this pressure is directed against and where it can eventually lead.

[Golan] Yes, but you know, Mr. Netanyahu, other correspondents and I have been invited to the inauguration ceremony....

[Netanyahu, interrupting] Well, how can you compare the importance of correspondents with that of politicians?

[Golan] And when they spoke with me on the phone on 18 September I was explicitly told by the person who invited me that, although Tzur Yiga'l was situated within the Green Line, the real goal was to erase the Green Line and create a territorial continuity for settlements beyond the Green Line in the territories, and the settlement of Tzufim was mentioned in this respect. This fact, which was also published, has caused officials in Washington to hit the ceiling, as they like to say, and people have been muttering about having their noses tweaked.

[Netanyahu] No, excuse me, but I think that we simply have to draw a line. There is a limit to everything. Once again, I do not accept the concept of the Green Line; I do not agree with the opinion that Israel must return everything or even anything. If we act according to this kind of logic, then we have to withdraw from every inch of land on which we have been attacked by the Arabs and which is clearly essential for our security. The inevitable conclusion of this kind of thinking is that the border extends to the suburbs of Tel Aviv. In this specific instance, however, we are talking about a settlement that is inside the Green Line, and I see no reason for this ruckus, which I find totally incomprehensible.

[Zissowitz] You have emphasized that this settlement is on the western side of the Green Line. Does this imply that in your opinion the establishment of settlements beyond the Green Line should be prevented or postponed?

[Netanyahu] No, you heard me say one minute ago that I do not accept this rule at all. You are certainly aware of my position regarding settlement in all parts of Eretz Yisra'el.

[Golan] No matter what the timing?

[Netanyahu] The question of timing is another matter that I do not want to get into. It is irrelevant, however, because the question you asked is theoretical and I do not know of any intention, as you said, to establish a settlement beyond the Green Line during the coming week.

[Zissowitz] Let us go on to another issue: the invitations to the peace conference. There are various reports that invitations will be issued very soon. Do you think that the prevailing atmosphere—the crisis with the United States and Britain's statement of support for the Arab and Palestinian position against the establishment of settlements—together with the clarifications that Israel is requesting from the United States serve to create a conducive climate for us to attend the conference at this time?

[Netanyahu] Look, I think that one has to separate two things. One is the question of the general atmosphere, while the second issue is the question of the specific agreements or understandings we are trying to reach with the United States. As for the general atmosphere, I would definitely say that it has become slightly gloomier over the last few weeks. We cannot hide from the truth. We know very well that a series of issues has led to increased tension between Israel and the United States. Incidentally, this was not the result of actions taken by Israel but the attempt for the first time to create a linkage between economic aid and political policy, something that we cannot accept. We obviously aspire to maintain good and even excellent relations with the United States, but the problem of atmosphere is one thing, while what I consider the more cardinal issue of specific understandings—which I will not detail—that we are discussing with the United States, is another. We have not concluded our work on this, and I hope we will be finished shortly.

[Golan] Yes, one thing we are still lacking is any Palestinians. Is it good for Israel to attend the conference without the Palestinians or without resolving the problems between us and the Arabs of Eretz Yisra'el? After all, the peace initiative came into being only after several years of the intifadah.

[Netanyahu] That is not true, because Israel has requested direct negotiations with its neighbors since its very inception. This is turning things upside down. The Arab-Israeli conflict gave birth to the Palestinian problem in 1948 and not the other way around. It is also what sustains the Palestinian problem and not the other way around. If we make peace with a major Arab country such as Syria, I believe that we will make great progress toward resolving what is called the Palestinian problem, while I am doubtful that the Palestinians could stand up to the Arab world if one decided to launch a process only with them. Therefore, we have always believed in direct negotiations with the Arab countries, and we are trying to make progress on both tracks; if we encounter difficulties on one track, however, it should not necessarily prevent us from taking the other. At the moment, however, we still have questions that have not been clearly resolved on both tracks, and I hope we will get clear answers on them.

[Zissowitz] Thank you very much, Deputy Minister Netanyahu.

Settler Says Government Bars New Settlements

TA2209095491 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Excerpts] Uri Ari'el, secretary general of the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, revealed that the government has not permitted the establishment of new settlements in the territories in recent months.

Ari'el said that he and his fellow settlers had been notified that establishing new settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip is being delayed due to considerations of timing and location. He expressed the hope that the government will permit the nuclei of five new settlements to be set up.

Ari'el told Qol Yisra'el that the expansion of existing settlements does not require any government authorization as the development plans that have already been endorsed suffice. [passage omitted]

Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu expressed amazement over the furor surrounding the establishment of Tzur Yig'al, and said that if there was criticism of settlement within the 1967 borders, then the trend that was taking shape is already clear to everyone and should be rejected.

Knesset Member [MK] Mikha'el Eytan [Likud] rejected the criticism, saying that anyone who complains about Jewish settlement on the hilly ridge along the Green Line is revealing the true intention of creating a Jewish ghetto by the beach.

The Peace Now organization demanded that the prime minister call off the planned ceremony at the new settlement of Tzur Yig'al. The Peace Now activists said that the government is planning a festival to mark the erasure of the Green Line on the eve of the UN debate on revoking the decision equating Zionism with racism.

Labor Party MK Ya'aqov Tzur said that by establishing a controversial settlement the government is trying to blur the difference between settlement on the western side of the Green Line and settlement in areas whose future has still to be decided.

No Word of U.S. Invitation to Peace Talks

TA2109171991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Excerpts] Jerusalem has not heard about the U.S. Administration's intention to send invitations to the peace conference as soon as next week. Our political correspondent Arye Golan reports that during his latest visit to Jerusalem, Secretary of State Baker showed his interlocutors the text of the invitation he was preparing, and the latter expressed dissatisfaction with the mention of UN Resolution 242. [passage omitted]

Reporters claim that Secretary Baker plans to send invitations to the Middle East peace conference even before the Palestine National Council meets in two days so as to pressure the Palestinians to accept the conference according to his terms. [passage omitted]

Timing Said Too Early

TA2209055591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] In Jerusalem, there was no confirmation of reports that invitations to the peace conference are to be issued in two days. A series of problems remains to be resolved, political sources in Jerusalem said, noting that it is still too early to issue invitations. Our political correspondent Arye Golan reports:

At least two pieces are still missing from the puzzle Secretary of State James Baker has been trying to put together for so many months: the Palestinian representation in the Jordanian delegation, and the letters of assurances. When they meet next Wednesday, Baker hopes to show Foreign Minister David Levi and Ambassador Shoval a new draft of the letter of assurances that will be given to Israel following what Baker heard in Jerusalem. During the talks in Jerusalem, Shamir, Levi, and Arens asked that Israel be promised, among other things, that the negotiations will indeed be direct, without U.S. or Soviet involvement and without the Arabs having recourse to the superpower sponsors every time the discussions with Israel hit a snag. Israel also has reservations about the wording of the invitation to the conference. The Israeli ministerial team requested that the invitation explicitly stipulate that the direct negotiations to be launched after the opening session are meant to lead to a contractual peace between Israel and the Arabs. The draft of the invitation presented in Jerusalem merely states that the purpose of the conference is to achieve peace accords in the sense of a true peace. This phrasing does not satisfy Shamir, Levi, and Arens.

And the major problem remains: There is still no Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Therefore, the sources in Jerusalem said, it is a bit early to send out invitations to the conference, unless Baker wants to present the Palestine National Council with a fait accompli and leave them the clear choice of either jumping on the train as it is slowly leaving the station or standing alone on the platform.

Levi to U.S. Looking for 'New Draft' of Support

TA2209063291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi last night left for the United States to attend the UN General Assembly discussions. Our political correspondent Arye Golan was told that while in New York, Minister Levi will meet the U.S. secretary of state, who will give him a new draft of the letter of assurances for Israel.

Reports on Palestinians' Attendance at PNC

Legal Moves Threatened

TA2309102291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Text] The prime minister's bureau has made clear that there is no basis for reports that Israel has allowed Faysal al-Husayni and Hanan 'Ashrawi to attend the Palestine National Council [PNC] meeting opening today in Algiers. Ehud Gol, the prime minister's media adviser, told our political correspondent Arye Golan that if the two attend the meetings in Algiers, legal steps will be taken against them.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0800 GMT on 23 September reports: "Algerian sources have reported that the PNC discussions will be attended by Faysal al-Husayni and Hanan 'Ashrawi. According to the sources, Israel accepted a U.S. demand that they be allowed to take part in the PNC discussions. This report, however, has not been confirmed by any other source."]

Conditions for Yes to Baker

TA2209072991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Excerpt] The Palestine National Council [PNC] will convene tomorrow. Faysal al-Husayni and Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi will apparently return to Israel today, one day before the PNC meets in Algiers. Council chairman Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih said yesterday that no one with self-respect will attend a peace conference initiated by the United States. Our correspondent in the territories Moti Amir reports.

The letter of assurances Secretary of State Baker gave the Palestinians includes a clause dealing in detail with the Palestinian people's political rights but does not take any position regarding the Palestinians' demand for self-determination. Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi described the document as unsatisfactory and said that it does not address three fundamental questions: the right of self-determination, the status of East Jerusalem, and a freeze on settlements. In East Jerusalem there is currently disagreement on the chances of Palestinian participation in the peace conference. Several notables, including Bassam al-Sa'ih, son of the PNC chairman, believe that the troika of 'Ashrawi, al-Husayni, and al-Agha have not received anything from the Americans and that the United States had misled the Palestinians from the very beginning and given them false hopes.

Sources close to Faysal al-Husayni, on the other hand, feel that progress has been made, albeit less than expected, and that the PNC should make its decision according to the reports submitted by Faysal al-Husayni and Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi. Various leaflets calling for a closing of ranks have been recently distributed in East Jerusalem prior to the anticipated struggle at the PNC convention. The leaflets demand that the PNC respond positively to Baker on the condition that the PLO nominate its representatives to the delegation, including residents of East Jerusalem, and that a prior commitment be given regarding the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. [passage omitted]

Returned Deportee Barred

TA2209172191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] The Civil Administration has rejected the request by 'Ali 'Abdallah Abu-Hilal, a member of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, to leave for Algeria to participate in the Palestine National Council [PNC] conference. Abu-Hilal is the person who was permitted to return from exile in the deal that brought Samir As'ad's body back to Israel.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that Abu-Hilal appended to his request an invitation he had received from the chairman of the PNC. The Civil Administration gave him the negative response within a few hours of the request.

MK's Urge PNC To Accept Palestinians

TA2209163391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Twenty-four opposition Knesset members [MK's] as well as Peace Now movement leaders and members of the International Center for Peace have called upon the Palestine National Council [PNC] to support the convocation of the peace conference and permit the Palestinians in the territories to send their representatives to the conference. Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that in its call, the group says that the Palestinians are duty bound, for the sake of peace, to become more flexible and allow their demands to be discussed in a peace conference. The Palestinian leaders must bear in mind that their brethren will solve their national problem only through peace with Israel.

The manifesto is signed by all the MK's from the Citizens Rights Movement, MAPAM [United Workers Party], and Shinuy, plus 14 Labor Party doves.

Arabs Want Oversight for PLO, Uprising Leaders

TA2209103391 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 22 Sep 91 p 1

[Report by Pinhas 'Inbari]

[Text] In the first demand of its kind, notables in the territories are demanding that the Palestine National Council [PNC] allow them to set up a supreme body in the territories to deal with general and political affairs of the Palestinian population, including their participation in the peace conference, and to set up an establishment to supervise the PLO's daily activities. This is included in a petition which is being signed in the territories these days and which will be submitted to the PNC.

Our correspondent notes that the demand to establish a supreme body in the territories means the termination of intifadah because the body in question is slated to replace the Unified National Leadership of the Intifadah, and will act in the open.

Decision-Sharing Sought

TA2109204491 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1920 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] People in the territories are embroiled in a fierce battle. In a meeting yesterday in al-Hakawati theater in East Jerusalem, the participants went so far as to call upon the PLO to carry out a purge and, most importantly, remove Faruq Qaddumi from his post as head of the PLO's Political Department. One of the speakers claimed that the PLO had never appointed residents of the territories to its National Committee. This line was augmented today in a new manifesto, signed by dozens of personalities from the territories, which includes a demand for the establishment in the territories of a recognized leadership that will be involved in making decisions regarding the peace talks together with the PLO's institutions abroad. The signatories of the manifesto, most of whom are leftists but some of whom are also associated with Fatah, are in fact demanding that the PLO's Executive Committee be deprived of exclusivity in conducting the negotiations by forming a new institution that will assume responsibility for all the decisions, as one means.

Another manifesto merely reaffirmed the pledge of allegiance to Yasir 'Arafat. New leaflets distributed today by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad again expressed opposition to the peace conference, meanwhile threatening Faysal al-Husayni and his associates.

The view now is that this argument is about to become even noisier in the weeks that remain before the target date the Americans have set for the delivery of the invitations and the receipt of the final Palestinian answer.

Minister Says Bush Wants 'Second Holocaust'

TA2109184291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Minister Rehav'am Ze'evi of the right-wing Tehiya [as heard] Party has again lashed out at U.S. President Bush. In an interview with IDF Radio, Ze'evi accused Bush of wanting to lead Israel to a second Holocaust, but he denied calling the U.S. President an anti-Semite in last week's cabinet meeting. [A similar report on Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1600 GMT on 21 September cites Ze'evi as having said that "Bush is hostile to Israel, his policy smacks of anti-Semitism, and it may lead to a second Holocaust." Ze'evi is also reported as having said that "the peace conference would be a forum where Israel will be humiliated and the target of attacks. He believes that the chances for a speedy resolution of the conflict are slim and that our generation will continue to live by the sword."]

In response, opposition Knesset members [MK's] have called on the prime minister to dismiss Minister Ze'evi from the cabinet. They say Ze'evi's verbal attacks on President Bush engender hatred. MK 'Edna Solodar of Labor said if the prime minister does not distance himself from Ze'evi's comments, he will diminish his own credibility.

Arens on Arab View of Loan Guarantees Refusal

TA2009145691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] Minister Moshe Arens regrets the fact that the United States has provided the Syrian president with ammunition in the form of its position on the loan guarantees for Israel. He will not be at all surprised if in the future, President al-Asad makes his participation in the peace process conditional on further U.S. refusals to approve loan guarantees for Israel.

Minister Arens added that the Arabs apparently view the loan guarantee issue as a major victory. They have always opposed aliyah and have asked the USSR to stop it. They had never hoped that the U.S. Administration, which helped obtain the exit of Jews from the Soviet Union, would announce that the time is not right to help Israel resettle immigrants.

Minister Arens believes that the confrontation with the United States could have been avoided had the administration not raised conditions for the loan guarantees. Still, he hopes that since this is not the first time differences of opinion with the United States have emerged, we will overcome them this time as well.

Minister Arens emphasized again that Israel is not at all considering putting an end to the settlement drive. He was addressing members of B'nai B'rith in Tel Aviv, and his remarks were reported by our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe.

On U.S. Aid, Shaykh 'Ubayd

TA2009164791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Excerpts] Minister Moshe Arens hopes that the dispute over the loan guarantees for Israel will not ultimately also include the economic and military aid the United States gives us. [passage omitted]

Regarding the hostages and POW's held in Lebanon, Minister Arens said that Shaykh 'Ubayd is Israel's and the West's strongest bargaining chip. It was not easy to lay hands on him. When he was captured, the United States joined those who criticized us, but it now appears that everyone enjoys this chip.

Minister Arens was talking to B'nai B'rith members in Tel Aviv.

Shamir—U.S. Threatens Authority To Act

TA2209113091 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 22 Sep 91 p 3

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by Ya'aqov Edelstein; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Edelstein] Where do we stand on the issue of the loan guarantees for immigration absorption? What is the gap in positions between Israel and the United States?

[Shamir] In our talks with Baker, we insisted that it was not the Israeli Government that was waging a confrontation with the U.S. Administration. We submitted the request for loan guarantees. The matter is for Congress to decide. We cannot engage in U.S. congressional maneuvers. We do not give orders to either Congress or AIPAC [America Israel Public Affairs Committee]. We are not a party to negotiations; we can only issue advice. We insist on a principle that the Americans do not accept. We must maintain relations with our friends in the United States. They are American citizens. During the talks, it was agreed that the Israeli ambassador to the United States would report on the meetings to our friends in Congress and within the Jewish community.

[Edelstein] Is there a trend in the United States toward establishing a linkage between the guarantees and the settlements or toward pressuring Israel to change its policy through U.S. aid?

[Shamir] There is a trend in the U.S. Administration to try and use U.S. aid to commit us to a certain policy. The United States wants Israel to accept the political concept known as territories for peace. This is the essence of the disagreement. Israel claims that it will set its policy in the course of political negotiations. The role of the United States is just to bring the parties' positions closer together. We are not conducting negotiations with the United States, nor do we have to sign a peace agreement with Washington. The job of the United States is to get the parties closer to each other, not to serve as the judge or arbiter.

We say that the settlements are part of the negotiations, part of the whole territorial dispute between the Arabs and Israel. This issue belongs in the negotiations. We are not talking about a linkage between the aid money and settlements; we are talking about making all forms of aid conditional on the halting of settlement activity. They oppose it even when the money comes from other sources. The argument is not just over the allocation of aid funds on defined objectives, but on much more than that. They do not want us to spend money on goals that are not acceptable to them, even if the money comes from other budgets. According to their demand, we are forbidden to allocate funds from other budgets for this purpose. The argument is over the authority of the Israeli Government to act.

[Edelstein] What are the remaining points of difference regarding the memorandum of understanding or letter of assurances?

[Shamir] There are still issues that have to be clarified, various phrasings, including the issue of Palestinian representation. The United States has agreed to our demand not to include representatives of East Jerusalem in the Palestinian delegation; however, the Americans have not received a response from the Arab side regarding the composition of the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. [passage omitted]

[Edelstein] Do you believe that there has indeed been a change in Syria and that Hafiz al-Asad wants peace?

[Shamir] There clearly has been a tactical change. Syria has agreed to hold direct bilateral negotiations with Israel. We will see whether there has been a fundamental change when we get to the negotiations.

[Edelstein] Do the developments in the Soviet Union mean any change in Israeli-Soviet relations?

[Shamir] This dilemma is shared by the entire world community, and it also bothers the United States. Relations between the Soviet Union and Israel should be normalized shortly.

[Edelstein] Do you support maintaining separate relations with the various Soviet republics?

[Shamir] The Israeli consideration should be what will facilitate aliyah from those republics. We are following developments there. [passage omitted]

Moda'i on Aliyah, Settlement, Loan Guarantees

TA2009160591 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LESHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 20 Sep 91 pp 1, 2

[Interview with Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i by Sever Plotzker; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Plotzker] The phrase massive wave of immigration is beginning to sound a bit like an excuse for everything. This year half the number of Jews that were originally counted on in the 1991 draft budget will have actually arrived. So where is the saving? Will we end the year with a surplus?

[Moda'i] Whatever we managed to save in the direct absorption of immigrants we will use to cover expenses beyond the budgetary allocation. We will be very happy if we do not need a supplementary budget.

[Plotzker] Who went outside the confines of their budget? Who is responsible?

[Moda'i] Mainly the Construction and Housing Ministry. Its digression from the original budget ate up all the savings from the smaller scope of immigration. We are talking about at least 360 million shekels.

[Plotzker] Still, housing prices are running wild.

[Moda'i] That resulted from a planning error. The Construction and Housing Ministry encouraged building in peripheral areas, and while it is important to build in the Galilee or the Negev, the new immigrants refused to go there. They wanted to live in the center of the country, where there is a shortage of apartments. The result is that prices have been pushed up.

[Plotzker] Perhaps this was no mistake. Maybe this is a deliberate policy intended to create a shortage in the central part of the country?

[Moda'i] This is a bad policy.

[Plotzker] The Construction and Housing Ministry is boosting building in the territories. Is this too not a policy?

[Moda'i] The ministry has failed to furnish us with reliable information on the scope of construction work in the territories. The Treasury's accountant general mentioned approximately 3,000 housing solutions in the territories; that was included in the budget.

[Plotzker] But Sharon announced that 16,000 apartments are currently in the building process.

[Moda'i] We know nothing about it. This may be a digression or a faulty account.

[Plotzker] Is a digression of such dimensions—four times the original budget—possible?

[Moda'i] The numbers are problematic. In any case, clearly this building momentum is beyond proportion. It is not right.

[Plotzker] You mean that it is politically wrong?

[Moda'i] Anyone who rushes to build in Judaea, Samaria, Gaza, or the Golan without heeding the financial aspect thereof, and anyone who builds in a frenzy without infrastructure, is evidently skeptical about our ability to stand firm in negotiations over the future of the territories. This is a defeatist building boom. I have no doubts and I am not a defeatist.

[Plotzker] Do you also agree to freeze the settlements now, even if this is the condition the United States presents for granting the loan guarantees?

[Moda'i] Never. That demand is a precondition for the peace talks, but those must be conducted without any preconditions. If the Arabs and the United States present such terms, we have ours, too: that the intifadah end, that terrorism cease, that the United States stop selling weapons to the Arab countries, and more. I reject preconditions, but this does not imply that I favor an accelerated building drive in the territories.

[Plotzker] Are you against it?

[Moda'i] I favor maintaining the previous scope of building, of between 3,000 and 4,000 housing units a year. Perhaps, if we sustained the same building pace in those areas, the tension in relations with the United States could have been avoided. There is no point in deliberately infuriating the Americans. An accelerated building momentum in the territories as a premeditated provocation of the United States is an act of supreme idiocy.

[Plotzker] Do you see Israel as continuing to have control over the territories as the sole sovereign?

[Moda'i] Yes, ever since the Six-Day War....

[Plotzker] The Six-Day War?

[Moda'i] It was exactly that war that changed my view of the world. I sensed the danger to Israel's existence. Ever since then I have been against returning the territories. They are the guarantee for our security. We were given moral and legal justification with respect to that territory. I am not motivated by mysticism, nor do I favor Israel's controlling both banks of the Jordan River [Herut's anthem].

[Plotzker] But you would like to see Israel stretch from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River?

[Moda'i] Indeed. I can see a solution that will leave Israel in control of all the territories in the end. We were victorious in one war and in another, and these areas are now protecting us, granting us strategic depth. Why should we cede them? Where have you ever seen a parallel show of generosity among nations?

[Plotzker] Is this not a sure recipe for a perpetual war between us and the Palestinians?

[Moda'i] I favor a solution by way of cantonization, autonomous regions, as in Switzerland.

[Plotzker] You must be joking. Can you envision Israelis and Palestinians living harmoniously together everywhere in Eretz Yisra'el under Israeli rule, like the citizens of Switzerland?

[Moda'i] I did not mean Switzerland literally but as a model of understanding among different nationalities residing in the same country. I am, however, fully aware of the problems involved in this solution as a rule, and particularly in the Middle East.

[Plotzker] And yet you recommend it?

[Moda'i] Israeli rule over Judaea, Samaria, Gaza, and the Golan Heights is a fact. That is why I support a solution involving Palestinian autonomy. A strong autonomy.

[Plotzker] Do you believe that the peace conference will be held soon?

[Moda'i] It will meet in November or thereabouts. President Bush is in great need of a diplomatic-political victory in the Middle East, and he will act accordingly. Do not forget that the United States is currently the only superpower in the world and that its President may even regard himself as ruler of the world.

[Plotzker] Does such a single-superpower world worry you?

[Moda'i] From our standpoint it is definitely better than when the hostile Soviet superpower ruled in parallel. If Israel conducts itself wisely, it can successfully find its place in this new reality or pax americana and an American world order.

[Plotzker] But Minister Rehav'am Ze'evi has already branded President Bush an anti-Semite. What chance do we have of getting along with him?

[Moda'i] To say such a thing about President Bush is foolish.

[Plotzker] Should Ze'evi be dismissed from the cabinet?

[Moda'i] The prime minister reacts on behalf of the entire cabinet and he has his own style. He may react in another six months, everything according to his constitution.

[Plotzker] Yitzhaq Shamir and George Bush do not seem to enjoy compatible chemistry at the moment. What about yourself?

[Moda'i] Even under a pax americana, no U.S. policy is determined by the President's personal taste. That is why I do not believe Israel is embroiled in a deep crisis with the United States. The crisis can be seen as personal, one stemming from local aspirations and the like. In the overall picture, the U.S.-led peace process is good for Israel. [passage omitted]

[Plotzker] Have you devised economic plans such as taxes or new measures should we not receive U.S. loan guarantees now?

[Moda'i] We have not thought up a "zero guarantee option." We will not impose new economic measures on the public tomorrow, as in the final analysis they will not yield much. The scope of the problem is too broad for us to resolve by raising the Value-Added Tax by 1 or 2 percent, to give you just one example.

[Plotzker] Are the loan guarantees critical for the Israeli economy? Are they indispensable?

[Moda'i] They are the starting point and the means to obtain foreign credit in the gigantic scope necessary to absorb mass immigration. We also need them to obtain credit both as part of them and outside them based on the fact that the United States views us as a solid and nearly risk-free debtor. Without them we will be totally defenseless against the entire international capital market.

Everyone follows the U.S. example of how to treat us, which is why deferral of the guarantees could affect our ability to obtain outside resources. It will be extremely difficult to weather such a blow.

[Plotzker] Do you think we absolutely cannot do without them?

[Moda'i] Even if the Israeli economy could somehow handle the blow, aliyah could not and it will shrink. Ultimately we will then have to cut the aid to new immigrants, investments in housing, and jobs, thereby hurting aliyah. The Soviet Jews will then vote with their feet, which is to say they will stay behind and will not come.

[Plotzker] Yet in the early 1970's we took in a very large number of immigrants without guarantees. How did we do it then?

[Moda'i] I read what you wrote on the matter and I agree: We really were successful then. At that time we absorbed on our own a huge wave of immigrants, not smaller than today's relative to the size of the population and the economy. I think, though, that it was mainly the personal success of one man: then Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir. He knew how to talk the public into consuming less, saving more, and directing its savings to the investment channels desirable for the economy. But Sapir was unique. I am not he.

[Plotzker] Do we need Sapir's old methods once again?

[Moda'i] Sapir could translate a macroeconomic policy into a myriad of practical microeconomic measures which bore the desired results. He had his finger on the pulse. I remember him well as a man who got things done. In any event, right now the Israeli economy does not need Milton Friedman's methods. [passage omitted]

Commentary Warns U.S. Against 'Pushing Shamir'

TA2009145991 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 20 Sep 91 p 8

[Commentary by Moti Basok: "The Gaps Have Widened"]

[Text] James Baker departed Israel on the eve of Yom Kippur leaving behind a very angry, very disappointed, and frustrated political leadership—including the prime minister—which is a very dubious recipe for the convening of a Middle East peace conference, in particular for its chances of succeeding. It is well known that a peace conference is the preferred target of the Bush-Baker foreign policy.

When Shamir is angry he responds when, where, on what issue, and the way he chooses. And Shamir does respond. Whoever saw him part from Baker last Tuesday saw a different prime minister, tense like a spring, nervous, angry. It is hard to imagine what point the Americans saw in pushing Shamir to the wall and almost holding a gun to his head if their aim at the moment is the success of the peace conference, unless they still do not know the Israeli prime minister. Shamir is a politician with nerves of steel. He cannot be bent through force and threats, even if they are called loan guarantees for immigrant absorption. On the contrary, his response in such cases is always the same—ending the game, stopping the peace process. A wounded Shamir, a beaten Shamir, will close himself in. Israel will not come to the peace conference. He did it once before, in the previous government, virtually on the eve of the Israeli-Palestinian meeting in Cairo in early 1990, and he will do it again in late 1991 or early 1992 unless the Americans rush to calm him down in the coming weeks.

Baker's seventh visit to the Middle East was from the start aimed at moving Israel, the Palestinians, Syria, and Jordan one step forward toward the peace conference although most of the work was already done by the secretary of state in recent months and most of the essential agreements between the various sides, including Lebanon, are already in his pocket.

In early September it looked as though the peace conference was on the right track. Then came the bang. On the eve of Baker's seventh trip to the region, U.S. President George Bush decided, for reasons of his own, to smash the Israeli request for guarantees in a gigantic explosion. He also made sure that the reverberations reach each corner of the Middle East at an incredibly high decibel level. Bush is not a novice in statesmanship, politics, diplomacy, and tactics. He knows that Israel can be told "no" several other ways. It is not clear why, but the president decided to act this time like a bull in the very special china shop of the peace process and on the eve of the historic agreement on the convening of the peace conference. Did he do it because the massive Israeli settlement policy in the territories by Yitzhaq Shamir and Ari'el Sharon made him furious? Or because he wanted to signal something to the Arabs, something like: The Bush-Baker administration's attitude toward you is different from that of all the previous administrations you knew over the past 24 years?

Either way, the outcome of the President's aggressive and boisterous tactics with regard to the loan guarantees could be fateful for the peace process. In such a highly charged atmosphere in Israeli-U.S. relations and in a relationship so rife with distrust and deep-set suspicions, Yitzhaq Shamir and Israel will not come to the conference.

Baker arrived in Jerusalem to tie the remaining loose ends regarding the peace conference, and for now the matter seems closed. Predictably, however, the participants in the talks devoted most of their time and attention to the other, secondary issue of the loan guarantees, and here the gap between Washington and Jerusalem only widened.

With respect to the peace process, the good news from the secretary's visit to Jerusalem was the document in which all the pledges and understandings the United States has promised Israel over the past few months were put down in writing, including the commitment that the Palestinians will not enjoy a separate status in the talks, that they will be part of the Jordanian delegation (and thus will not receive a separate invitation for the conference), and that no deportee, representative of the Palestinian diaspora, or a resident of East Jerusalem will be on that delegation. Jerusalem welcomed that "letter of understandings" and beyond that felt relieved both because people here had been afraid that the Americans would renege on earlier pledges and because the U.S. team of officials which visited Israel a few weeks earlier seemed unable to reach an agreement with the Israeli team of senior officials (Yosi Ben-Aharon, Elyaqim Rubinstein, Eytan Bentzur, and Salay Meridor) on some of the subjects addressed in that letter.

Washington and Jerusalem must still resolve matters of lesser importance as well as set the date and the venue for the conference. Yet in the current state of affairs in the Washington-Jerusalem axis, even a seemingly marginal point could result in the indefinite postponement of the conference. Plus, if the issue of the loan guarantees is not resolved, Shamir is bound to make life for the Americans miserable. In this context, the Americans need only recall, as a valid case in point, the months it took them to persuade Jerusalem to allow the United Nations to participate in the conference, even in the status of "silent observer."

The loan guarantee affair has become the current hot issue between Israel and the United States. Defense Minister Moshe Arens complained last week that even though the United States had always objected to settlements, no administration has engaged in a confrontation with Israel on the matter. Arens also bickered that in the talks with Baker last week, the secretary failed to promise Israel that it would receive the loan guarantees in January if it accepts the 120-day deferral or, alternatively, that they would be approved then. In his meetings, the secretary even intimated that there is no certainty that Israel would receive the entire sum it requires.

Jerusalem is fuming. At the same time, Shamir realized that Israel cannot afford to carry on the direct and public clash with the White House. Jerusalem will, consequently, maintain a lower profile on this subject in the immediate future and will try to redirect the argument to less public and more diplomatic channels.

The staff at the prime minister's bureau in Jerusalem believes that President George Bush and Secretary James Baker are the least sympathetic to Israel since Eisenhower. Minister Ehud Olmert, a Shamir crony, parrots this in the media over and over again. This creates a special difficulty when the issue involved is one so crucial and complex as an international conference. The promises Secretary Baker made in Damascus on Yom Kippur regarding the Golan Heights merely served to underscore these sentiments in Jerusalem. Israel had thought that as a sponsor of the peace conference, the United States would balance the pro-Arab positions of the other sponsor, the Soviet Union. In this regard, Jerusalem is inclined to conduct a reassessment, what with the other international bodies that are expected to participate in the conference—the United Nations and the West European community—supporting the Arab demand for territories, all the territories, in exchange for peace.

While the Americans argue continuously that there is no linkage [previous word in English] between the loan guarantees and the settlements and Shamir argues that none exists between the loan guarantees and the peace process, it is clear to one and all—Americans and Shamir included—that the issues are indeed very closely tied. As long as the mood that prevails in the relations between Bush and Shamir, the United States and Israel, has not improved dramatically, Shamir will not engage in the peace process. If he decides that the crisis is transient and can be resolved within a reasonable period of time, he will find a way to procrastinate and hold Israel's participation in the process off for a while. If he decides that the time has come to put the United States in its place, he will call it quits—by declaring elections, for one. The Americans, after all, should know: Faced at gunpoint with a choice of the territories or continued aliyah, Shamir will prefer the former.

HA'ARETZ—End Settlement 'Once and for All'

TA2009123791 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Sep 91 p B1

[Editorial: "End to the Settlements.... a Must"]

[Text] It is possible that the prime minister's refusal to postpone the request for a U.S. Congress discussion of the state guarantees for bank loans to the tune of $10 billion to finance immigrant housing is why George Bush toughened his position. It is also possible that the Israeli attempt to activate its friends in the House and Senate against the President's will evoked the outrage he expressed at the last week's news conference. At the same time, it is possible that the clash over the timing of the guarantees allocation was merely the catalyst that urged the President and the secretary of state to make it clear to Israel that the U.S. leadership will no longer tolerate the settlement drive which the Israeli Government has meticulously cultivated over the past two years.

The U.S. Administration ultimately presented Israel with a choice: Freeze the settlement enterprise and pledge not to renew it, or else the administration will veto any demand from Congress that the guarantees be given, even after four months. Furthermore, the U.S. Administration is demanding the establishment of an apparatus to enable it to examine and supervise the expenditure of funds Israel may get in loans, thus ensuring that the money is not used for settlement—whether expanding the existing ones or setting up new ones.

This demand expresses a lack of faith in the integrity of the Israeli Government, reinforced by what the Americans regard as omissions or even misrepresentations in Israel's report on the use made of the $400 million loan guarantees.

This American policy, which the secretary of state made sure to air publicly during his flight to Cairo two days ago, is forcing the government to decide what it wants: additional settlements or financial aid to absorb the mass of Soviet immigrants.

The U.S. leadership is determined to put an end to the Israeli policy of carefully packing the West Bank and the Gaza Strip with Jewish settlements. James Baker and George Bush described the settlements as an obstacle to peace a long time ago. And, since the Arab leaders who are supposed to take part in the Middle East peace conference made it clear to them that their participation is conditional on an end to settlement, the Bush-Baker duo reached the conclusion that it must demand that Israel pledge not to go on with it.

The secretary of state disproved the version according to which he is less determined on this issue than the President; just the opposite: It was Baker who advised Bush to address the U.S. public and explain his opposition to giving the guarantees now and to the continuation of the settlement drive in general.

The President's appearances a week ago Thursday and last Monday, coupled with the briefing by the "senior official" (namely, James Baker himself), left no shred of doubt regarding their determination. The willingness of congressmen to confront the President on this issue is diminishing, the media are largely supportive of the President's stand, and it seems that Bush can rely on broad public support as well. The assumption that the guarantees can be furnished by the world's wealthy Jews is certain to prove to be an illusion. It will be impossible to obtain $10 billion in bank loans on the free market; there will be no loans without the administration guarantees; and, unless an end is put to the settlement drive in the occupied territories, no guarantees are to be expected.

This is the naked truth regarding the situation, from which the Shamir-Sharon-Netanyahu government must draw the only possible conclusion that will allow us to continue to absorb the massive immigration: It must freeze its settlement enterprise once and for all. The U.S. Administration will no longer accept a freeze "for the duration of negotiations in the conference."

The U.S. Administration's decision to throw all its weight behind ending the settlement enterprise, which has served as a tool for creeping annexation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, should have been anticipated a long time ago. Shamir and his officials did not want to heed domestic and foreign warnings; now they have no choice but to do under pressure that which they could have done by grasping the political situation. Now they will have to pay for their mistake.

Further HA'ARETZ Comment

TA2209121991 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 22 Sep 91 p B1

[Commentary by Gid'on Samet: "Like in a Bad Dream"]

[Text] Sometimes it seems like a dream—a bad dream, as the prime minister himself put it. (When asked, Shamir said: The crisis? I think it will pass like a bad dream.) The conflict with the United States is now so deep that the government cannot understand it by simply looking at reality. As an alternative, over the past few weeks a fantastic set of arguments and images has been created here to bridge the wide gap. The most extreme expression came, as could be expected, from Yitzhaq Shamir. Here is what he said about the American people's support of their President's stand: "This is not real. This is not the reality. This is not the American people. The Americans will return to their senses."

Irrational elements in a leadership's policy necessarily create a screen of dreamy hallucinations between itself and the reality around it. It will not be an exaggeration to state that our government's line is similar to another ideological doctrine that for many years tried to recast reality in the communist bloc and failed. Only after this tough doctrine crumbled was the fragile nature of the public support for the regime revealed. We can say that, although the Soviet nation was oppressed and subdued by its leaders, most of it—being brought up with it—was captured by the main points of the ideology. Only now is it gleefully smashing its monuments. Here, we are still erecting the monuments.

We have an insufficient appreciation of the forces of blindness and habit operating here and affecting a large part of the public. To a large extent, it is for this reason that we see a relative majority supporting a policy that is far removed from reality and our true needs. Indeed, it sometimes seems that we are living in a bad dream: Only a minority favors the fanatic concept of Greater Israel, but a relative majority gives the makers of this concept the authority to lead us in accordance with it.

A broad gap has been created here over the years between an outdated ideology that has been forced upon us and a concrete reality that does not live in peace with us. The Israeli public does not regard settlement as an ideology worthy of dominating Israel's policy. A complicated process of brainwashing, however, has made the Israelis accustomed to identifying settlements with Israel's independence, our sovereignty to act as we see fit, and our national pride.

Last week, for example, Binyamin Netanyahu—one of the most eloquent but shallow spokesmen of government policy—tried, on all networks in Israel and abroad, to sell his listeners the claim that the choice the Americans have presented us with is whether to hurt geography (freezing settlements) or hurt demography (preventing financial aid for aliyah needs). The settlements are a quirk of the government and a small minority of the population. They are an obstacle, a difficult problem, an upheaval in the national agenda. The government, however, has succeeded in making a large portion of the people take up a false line of thought. It has managed to convert the settlements from an issue very much in dispute into a symbol of Israeli endeavor and determination.

Settlements are not the solution; they are the problem. What some 100,000 are doing today (some for reasons of comfort and finance), 4 million will one day have to fix with their own hands with great difficulty and at a very heavy price. We are dealing with a major diversion from Israel's true direction. The national blindness, however, has changed this issue from a very problematic and twisted sidetrack into the highway of our national policy, determining our fate.

It is hard to close this gap rationally, so the prime minister will present the troublesome political reality that the government's policy has created as a bad dream to be dispelled. Thus, we will all again be portrayed in an illusory, nationalistic fit as the repeated victims of the Holocaust and anti-Semitism. Again we will be offered a return to the Massada concept: Forsake the support of the greatest superpower and confront it, in a Refa'el Eytan-type of martyrdom, until we are proven correct, even if we have to fall on our swords. In the Israeli bad dream, settlements turn from a miserable historic mistake into a sacred goal worthy of any sacrifice.

Naturally, the settlement ritual, on every hill and under every tree, does not stand on its own. It is part of a semireligious belief that sanctifies the trees, hills, and rocks on which the government settles in Greater Israel. Defending the right to settle now is a precondition for the broader right. It is the restriction of the Likud's teaching: He who does not settle, he who does not believe in the great principle of Greater Israel, is a heretic. This means that each and every move of the Israeli Government—from aliyah to relations with the United States—is subject to this principle. "It is clear as day that Eretz Yisra'el is ours," Shamir said last week, "and I can guarantee nothing to anyone that contradicts this."

This is his dream and our nightmare. Nevertheless, the conflict between the two is nothing like a dispute over some important matter the likes of which can be found on every step in politics. What makes it unique and particularly dangerous is the element of hallucination; up there, people live in their own dream.

Things they like are sweet dreams; things they do not are bad dreams to be dispelled. And the worst of all the prime minister's and his partners' blind, zealous faith—in the twilight between policymaking and mysticism—is that they can really do it.

Al-Agha Interrogated on Meeting PLO Officials

TA1909123891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 19 Sep 91

[Text] Dr. Zakariya al-Agha from the Gaza Strip was interrogated this morning at the Petah Tiqva police station. He is suspected of meeting with PLO officials in London. Our correspondent Sefi Hendler reports that upon leaving the police station, al-Agha said that he had denied holding such meetings and that the interrogation had been polite. Here is his report:

[Begin recording] [Hendler] Dr. Zakariya al-Agha was interrogated by the police this morning at the General Investigation offices in Petah Tiqva under heavy security. Al-Agha's arrival was secured by a special police unit. He was surrounded by a police cordon and taken into the interrogation offices, where he was questioned to determine whether he had broken the Antiterror Law and met with PLO officials while overseas. Upon leaving the station, al-Agha said he denied the accusations.

[Al-Agha, in English] They accused me that I have met some persons from the PLO outside. I told them that I did not violate the law, and I have not seen anyone outside.

[Hendler] Al-Agha added that the interrogation was conducted in a polite manner. During his interrogation, al-Agha adopted the same line taken by Faysal al-Husayni and Hanan 'Ashrawi, who were interrogated before him. All three denied meeting PLO members. [end recording]

Foreign Minister on Baker Talks, UN Meeting

JN2009134891 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abdallah al- Nusur by George Tarif in Amman; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Tarif] Foreign Minister Dr. 'Aboallah al-Nusur, please: How do you assess U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's talks in Amman?

[Al-Nusur] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The Jordanian-U.S. talks have ended. The talks dealt with two issues; first, the U.S. efforts for peace in the region; and second, bilateral relations. With regard to the first topic—which is certainly more important and broader—some points and questions that were raised by the Jordanian Hashemite Government during the last two trips and before this most recent one were clarified. This is what was called the U.S. letter of assurances.

The truth is that the U.S. answers were in harmony with what had been verbally presented to us. We do not think that there is a difference between what was earlier presented and what we are now seeing. The content of this letter of assurances is currently being examined. We will study it from the legal and political angles. The U.S. side will be informed of any improvements or changes the Jordanian Government would deem appropriate. The talks were candid and clear.

Bilaterally, it provided an opportunity for us to review all aspects of bilateral relations, and for experts to discuss their details.

[Tarif] Dr. 'Abdallah, tomorrow you will leave for New York to attend the UN General Assembly meetings. What will your speech at the meeting encompass?

[Al-Nusur] This is in fact the 46th session. It is held annually in the last week of September and will continue until November. It is an opportunity to raise all issues of interest to the Arab group and to Jordan that were approved and listed on the agenda of the UN General Assembly. It is an opportunity for the counties to declare their policies on all issues of interest to the various countries. No doubt, from the time we joined the United Nations until now, without exception, our one and only concern has been the question of Palestine, the suffering of the Palestinian people, and Israel's aggressiveness, intransigence, and disregard for all that could lead to peace. This will be the basis for my speech.

[Tarif] Foreign Minister 'Abdallah al-Nusur, there are reports that a meeting will be held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meetings that will include the foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the PLO. What issues will this meeting tackle?

[Al-Nusur] Sir, you know that the Arab League Council—which was held at the level of foreign ministers of the Arab countries last week—unanimously decided to urge the Arab countries, which you have just listed, to participate in the peace conference, to coordinate their efforts, and to immediately unify Arab positions regarding the Palestinian question. The decision also urges Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid to make the contacts for such a meeting that would ensure the desired Arab coordination. In implementation of this decision, the five countries that you have mentioned will meet on Wednesday, 25 September, in New York where Arab ministers and ministers from almost the entire world will be present. Yes, this is with regard to the efforts on the Arab level.

[Tarif] For our part, we thank Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur for this interview.

Al-Masri on Baker Talks, Settlements Issue

JN2109141091 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Text] In a statement to our radio today, Jordanian Prime Minister Tahir al-Masri said that efforts to hold a Middle East peace conference have reached an advanced stage following U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's seventh tour of the region.

Al-Masri stressed that Jordan obtained a large portion of its major demands regarding the peace process in the letter of intent it received from Baker. He added that Jordan will give its reply to the U.S. side concerning the contents of the letter of intent after studying it in detail. However, al-Masri noted that the issue of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories is not documented in this letter in the manner Jordan desires. He said that this issue will be the major point that will be discussed at an Arab meeting during the next few weeks.

The Arab parties that are directly concerned with the peace process—Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and the PLO—are scheduled to meet in New York on Wednesday [25 September].

Finally, the Jordanian prime minister asserted that all sides are aware that this stage is a decisive one in our history, and that there are strong feelings of the need to seize this peace opportunity, especially since it might be the last one.

'Ashrawi Comments on Meeting With Baker

JN2009122191 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Report by 'Ali Hamati]

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker stopped in Damascus today at the end of his seventh tour to the region to complete the talks he had begun in Damascus within efforts to convene a Middle East peace conference.

The U.S. secretary of state met with Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, member of the delegation of Palestinian figures, in Amman this morning. A Palestinian spokesman said that the meeting was held upon Baker's request to clarify the letter of assurance he conveyed to the Palestinian delegation during his meeting with them in occupied Jerusalem on 16 September.

'Ashrawi arrived in Amman this morning from the Arab-occupied territories. She talked with the U.S. secretary about an hour. The secretary of state said that progress was made during the talks. He expressed optimism about the meeting.

For her part, in a meeting with journalists following her meeting with Baker, 'Ashrawi stressed that she came to Amman to meet with the U.S. secretary after receiving forthright instructions in this regard from the PLO today at dawn.

'Ashrawi said that her meeting with Baker was conducted in a very positive atmosphere; some points were clarified; and some progress was made. She said, however, that some points still require clarification. 'Ashrawi refused to go into the details of the U.S. letter of assurances to the Palestinians. She described the letter as a draft that has not been finalized yet. She added that several issues need to be followed up.

'Ashrawi praised the constant and special relationship between Jordan and Palestine. She did not rule out meetings with Jordanian officials if her agenda does in fact include them. Dr. 'Ashrawi explained that she does not represent any side or part, and stressed that the PLO is responsible for representing all Palestinians. She is only a citizen who was asked to carry out a certain task. 'Ashrawi concluded by saying: The Palestinian leadership seriously and cautiously discussed the U.S. letter of assurances. It then decided to ask her to meet with Baker in Amman for more clarifications.

Baker is expected to leave Damascus this afternoon at the end of his talks with Syrian officials. This is the secretary's second visit to Damascus within his seventh tour, allowing for more discussions with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

Grants News Conference

JN2109112291 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 21 Sep 91 pp 1, 5

[By Nirmin Murad, JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Excerpts] Amman—A Palestinian representative from the occupied West Bank who met with American Secretary of State James Baker in Amman said afterwards the discussions had made progress but a lot of issues remained to be clarified before this week's meeting of the Palestine National Council (PNC) in Algiers.

Hanan 'Ashrawi, who met with Mr. Baker early Friday after crossing the river from her residence in Ramallah in the West Bank, and the secretary of state himself said some progress was made during their discussion but that there were no conclusive results.

"I thought the meeting went very well, I am glad we had the meeting and I think we are making some progress," Mr. Baker told reporters who gathered at the Mariott hotel where the U.S. secretary of state spent Thursday night.

"I can say that there was some progress, but not sufficient progress. We will have to work some more, and this (letter of assurances) will be another draft on the road to further drafts in order to achieve a final formulation," Dr. 'Ashrawi said in a press conference at the Palestine embassy following her meeting. [passage omitted]

Following is the transcript of Dr. 'Ashrawi press conference at the Palestine embassy:

['Ashrawi] The meeting was to pursue some of the issues dealing with the letter of assurances to get further clarifications and to get to some more answers and we asked for a reformulations of certain things and basically we concentrated on the three issues of settlements, East Jerusalem and self-determination I can say there was some progress but not sufficient progress we will have to work some more. This will just be another draft on the road to futher drafts in order to achieve a final formulation.

[Reporter] Do you think you are getting there? Do you think you can now recommend to the PNC to take part in this conference?

['Ashrawi] Well what I am going to do is present the PLO and the PNC with all the information we have been able to gather so far and with all the possible changes we might have, and it is up to them to take the right decision.

[Reporter] Did you feel that Mr. Baker is forthcoming?

['Ashrawi] To a certain extent.

[Reporter] Can you say which of these three issues is the main sticking point?

['Ashrawi] I would say these are issues of tremendous importance to the Palestinians and these are the issues that will enable the leadership to take a positive decision. So far the PLO has been extremely cooperative and responsive and the fact that they have asked me to come here and meet with Secretary Baker is another positive signal and I think that with sufficient work and persistence we will get there.

[Reporter] Was there any progress on these three issues?

['Ashrawi] Some, but not enough. There is work that has to be done.

In reality there was some progress but not sufficient, and therefore we consider this another draft and we do not consider that the letter of assurances has reached its final stages and I will present it to the Palestinian leadership, to the PLO and the PNC to follow up and then take the proper decision. In my opinion there is a future state in working on this letter and if we were able to continue with determination, especially on three core issues, stopping settlements, East Jerusalem and the right to self-determination, then in my opinion we will be able to get guarantees and more clarifications and answers. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Do you think they want real peace?

['Ashrawi] In my opinion the American administration is serious and it is exerting great effort and it is trying to begin a peace process. But we are also trying on our part to make sure that this process is based on international legitimacy and guaranteed Palestinian national rights and is moving in the right direction to end the occupation and recognise the Palestinans' right to self-determination and then move towards either an independent state or independent state with a confederal agreement (with Jordan).

[Reporter] Do you believe that process is going in the right direction?

['Ashrawi] I believe that there is still a lot of work to be done on the process.

[Reporter] But are you optimistic?

['Ashrawi] I always tell people I don't use the terms optimistic or pessimistic. I am very serious about this and very realistic and I have been asked to carry out a very serious task which I will do to the best of my ability. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Have you set up a date for a meeting with Baker?

['Ashrawi] We haven't decided on specific meetings but he asked for further meetings.

[Reporter] Did you accept a compromise proposal on representation on Jerusalem?

['Ashrawi] There have been no answers from our side on this. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] How do you measure American seriousness in light of Israel's continued settlement policy?

['Ashrawi] Israel actually challenges the U.S. continuously and tries to lead the process by imposing preconditions and exercising a policy of a fait accomplis and accelerating its measures against the Palestinian people. The U.S. says it is serious and that it works continously towards starting a political process based on legitimacy meaning Resolutions 242 and 338. The fact that the U.S. first has continued its efforts inspite of Israeli intransigence and Israeli insults against the American administration indicates some kind of a commitment. There is also the latest development meaning the confrontation between the U.S. administration and the congress or the administration and Israel. It means that Israel has challenged the American administration in its internal policies and asked for discussion of the loan guarantees even when the administration asked for postponing this request. Therefore, it registered a confrontation, which has many political ramifications.

As far as we are concerned, if we are to take it as an indication, it is a positive indication of the willingness of the U.S. and the existence of an independent political will to confront Israel, and this is unprecedented. We have been accustomed to see Israel imposing its will on the U.S. and trying to dictate a political position based on Israel's interests. We see this as an indication and a beginning of change, which may crystallise to a firm position and more effective and practical steps concerning the confrontation between the U.S. and Israel. But since efforts are continuing to find the format which is acceptable to all participating parties, or those who might participate also indicates the interest of the U.S. we want to point out that the weak point in this issue is that the U.S. considers that the mere acceptance by Israel to participate is an achievement and therefore, it is ready to give it many guarantees and down payments and tries to pull it to the negotiations table at any price. So there has been a retreat in the American position as a result of the Israeli pressures. On our part, we are trying to balance this retreat by insisting on international legitimacy and the core issues to find the mechanism that would allow the process to take its right course.

[Reporter] We hear Baker talking of ending occupation but not withdrawal. Was this discussed?

['Ashrawi] Yes it was discussed.

[Reporter] Were the basics defined?

['Ashrawi] It has not yet been finalised. I think the U.S. is quite serious about this peace process, I think they have exhibited a sense of determination and singlemindedness, they have been trying to overcome obstacles seriously and they have been trying to supply the assurances needed by the different parties. The confrontation was brought upon by Israeli insistence on presenting the request for loan quarantees even when the U.S. asked them not to. Israeli insistence with a certain amount of arrogance and interference in American domestic policies and forcing the hand of the administration. This meddling in internal affairs has also brought about this confrontation between the U.S. and Israel. And I think that the administration's position on this issue has demonstrated a political will to take a firm stand, which is something that is not very unsual in American politics. We have always accused this state of equilibrium in the relationship between the U.S. and Israel as being a classic case of the tail wagging the dog. For the first time we see a determination, an ability and willingness to stand firm on an issue. We hope that this is symptomatic that Israel will not constantly be treated as the country above the law or deserving of preferrential treatment, and that the U.S. will take firm decisions and stands and therefore gain some credibility in the peace process as a country with independence.

I delivered a message (from Mr. 'Arafat) that he has asked me to meet Secretary Baker at the secretry's request in Amman, and in doing so he has demonstrated another proof of the PLO's serious endeavours and seriousness of intent at pushing the peace process forward and supporting Mr. Baker's effort to have a just peace process. Mr. 'Arafat also reiterated the three basic principles that we talked about: Settlement in the occupied territories, the issue of East Jerusalem and the Palestinian right to self-determination and also expressed the fact that the PLO has welcomed the peace effort and any positive response on these issues will help the PNC and the Palestinian leadership to take a positive response and attitude towards the conference.

[Reporter] How would you describe the gap now: Is it narrowing?

['Ashrawi] There is still a gap, but I don't think things are static from our experiences with reality. It is quite mobile, and therefore, I don't think any gap is going to be a permanent gap. I think that with serious hard work and dedication and if we're really committed to peace as the Palestinians are, then we should be able to bridge any gap. It takes real effort, determination and sincerity as well to be able to bridge gaps. I don't think we have achieved everything that we want, but I don't think that it is an impossible task.

[Reporter] Did you ask Baker to use his influence on Israel for the PNC members to go to Algeria?

['Ashrawi] Yes, we have asked Secretary Baker for that during our meeting in Jerusalem, he said he would see what he can do. It seems that the Israeli preempted him by announcing that they were not going to allow Palestinians to attend the PNC.

[Reporter] Any breakthrough in your discussions with Baker this morning?

['Ashrawi] I would not say there were any dramatic breakthoughs. Those of you who are familiar with the process of preparing for negotiations know that it is a very long and painstaking effort and issues have to be taken one at a time. We have to be extremely patient and persistent and dedicated in order to achieve results.

[Reporter] Will there be enough progress on the letter of assurances to get a positive response from the PNC?

['Ashrawi] Well I think that the intentions are there to work on the assurances as long and as hard as it takes. I think that the PNC will have sufficient data to evaluate and to take the proper decision but I am not sure whether the final draft will be ready before the PNC at least they will have the evolution of certain facts.

[Reporter] Will there be enough progress for the PLO to take a decision to go to the conference?

['Ashrawi] I wouldn't want to preempt the PNC decision.

[Reporter] Do you think that there will be a dialogue between the U.S. and the PLO directly?

['Ashrawi] I think that this is an inevitable decision. If the U.S. is really concerned about peace then real peace is based on solving the Palestinian problem which is the core of the conflict in the region and the Palestinian problem cannot be solved without the PLO. Therefore if the PLO choose to assign individuals, for the time being, to certain missions connected to the peace process this does not mean that the PLO will remain behind the curtains for a long time. This is just a stage and we will overcome it and I am sure that in the future the relationship will return to its normal state. But the American-Palestinian dialogue or the U.S. dialogue with the PLO is not an end in itself... It is a means and in our opinion it is admission of the legitimacy of PLO and the Palestinian leadership. We demand it as a means of reaching the real and serious solution to the region's problems.

There is a serious and consistent effort to prepare for the peace process and you know that the PLO since November 1998 [date as published], has approved a political programme and launched peace initiative and therefore we must be prepared at all times and prepare ourselves practically and not just theortically for the content of peace by translating our political positions to guarantee practical issues which we can upfollow [as published]. It is not enough to say that we need to achieve the right to self-determination but we also have to translate that slogan into a realistic content which can be applied practically.

[Reporter] Do you face the possibility of Israeli measures after meeting with PLO officials after you return to the West Bank?

['Ashrawi] The Palestinian uprising came because of a sense of challenge at taking risks and if we continue to censor ourselves or to place limits to ourselves based on assumptions of what Israel can do we that will not achieve anything. [sentence as published]

U.S. Conditions on Palestinians Protested

NC2109071991 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Ayatollah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah has criticized the defense pacts that are being concluded between some oppressed Arab countries and the United States, saying they aim to allow the latter to bring its forces to our region and intervene in its affairs.

'Allamah Fadlallah held the United States responsible for provoking discord and sedition among the Arab countries to keep Israel strong. He pointed out that the United States has asked Lebanon to halt resistance operations, to attend the peace conference without conditions, and to negotiate with the Zionist entity over water sharing in the hope that Israel might consider withdrawing from southern Lebanon at a later stage. He added that these U.S. conditions are a trap designed to bring down UN Security Council Resolution 425 and enable Israel to exercise greater control over Lebanon and undermine it from within.

His eminence noted that the U.S. assurances do not refer to anything called Palestine, but confine the issue instead to making the Arabs live in Palestine under Israeli custodianship without being allowed to establish a state of their own. He declared that the United States does not fulfill its promises and currently exercises this policy of giving false promises to the Arabs.

Fadlallah described the disagreement between the United States and Israel as a sham intended to put pressure on the Arabs to force them to make further concessions on Palestinian representation to ensure the success of the negotiations with Israel. He said: We cannot believe that there is a disagreement between the United States and Israel.

He remarked that the U.S. plans to lead the Palestinians to the slaughterhouse to kill the Palestinian cause. He added that if the Palestinians go to the peace conference according to the U.S. conditions, they will be signing a document of surrender to Israel and betraying future generations. He ended his remarks by saying: If the Palestinians are alert to what is happening, they will refuse to do so even in their current weak state.

Al-Musawi Criticizes Arab, Islamic 'Begging'

NC2309074991 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Text] Hizballah Secretary General 'Abbas al-Musawi has stressed that the most serious plot against our nation is begging from the United States. He said they want our minds and consciences to become American. He said the leaders of the Arab and Islamic world want to remain under U.S. patronage. The Lebanese leaders, he said, have gone to New York to meet George Bush. This is their wish, he said.

Al-Musawi was speaking at a ceremony held by the Islamic Resistance in Imam al-Mahdi Mosque in al-Ghubayri in Beirut's southern suburb to honor the martyrs whose bodies were recently returned by Israel. He said we should not beg America for peace, and that it is we who will make peace—because one of our main goals is to spread peace in the world.

Government Leaders Leave for UN Session

NC2109111891 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni, and Prime Minister 'Umar Karami left Beirut Airport at 1120 today for New York, where President al-Hirawi will deliver Lebanon's address to the United Nations.

Foreign Minister on Aims

NC2109121091 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Remarks by Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz to unidentified reporters at Beirut Airport on 21 September prior to departure of Lebanese delegation to New York for the UN General Assembly meetings—recorded]

[Text] Let me say once more that the Lebanese delegation's visit to the United Nations has a special character. This is a delegation that represents the country's unity following the long years of war. The trip to the United Nations comes after the Lebanese state has annulled all the Israeli pretexts concerning withdrawal from the Lebanese south. The visit, in this sense, is historic.

Furthermore, the trip comes as Lebanon and the entire region stand on the threshold of momentous changes that call for a high level of cohesion and unity of ranks as well as a correct assessment of the international situation. Mistakes are not allowed.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister, it is being said that Lebanon seeks U.S. guarantees concerning the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425 apart from the planned peace conference.

[Buwayz] Lebanon has clearly stated its position on this. Lebanon never has linked the implementation of Resolution 425 with any peace conference. Lebanon believes that this resolution is unambiguous and not open to negotiations. Lebanon believes that this resolution not only concerns it, but also the UN Security Council and the United Nations. I believe the United States, through several messages, has shown complete understanding of this fact. I believe that a more definite statement may be issued on this.

[Reporter] Mr. Minister, will the Lebanese delegation seek the establishment of an international fund to assist Lebanon?

[Buwayz] Certainly. Among the topics that the delegation will discuss is Lebanon's reconstruction. I believe that the president, the prime minister, and the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies will all hold talks on this.

[Reporter] Do you have any comment on the meeting of the [Moroccan-Algerian-Saudi] Tripartite Committee, for which you received an invitation yesterday?

[Buwayz] Of course, the Tripartite Committee is expected to hold a meeting there, probably under the chairmanship of King Hassan II, who may be in the United States in the next few days. We expect the committee to announce the establishment of the international fund.

[Reporter] My last question: It is being said that President al-Hirawi may visit the Vatican, following the U.S. visit. Is this true?

[Buwayz] I do not think that this is part of the current trip. Of course, the president may visit the Vatican at any moment, but I believe that the main purpose of the visit is to discuss the Lebanese issue and the issue of liberating the south at the United Nations.

Views Peace Conference

NC2209070291 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Remarks by Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz to unidentified Voice of Lebanon correspondent at the Plaza Hotel in New York upon arrival of the Lebanese delegation on 22 September for the UN General Assembly meetings—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Correspondent] Your Excellency, welcome to New York. We would like you to brief us on the topics which will be discussed on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meetings.

[Buwayz] This visit is the first after long years of bitter war. It also is the first visit since the start of national unity. Therefore, the three leaders arrived together as an expression of the national unity in Lebanon and of a unified will in Lebanon to liberate the occupied south by implementing Resolution 425.

The Lebanese delegation also will hold intensive discussions with world officials to brief them on Lebanon's progress so far and also to gather possibilities concerning the issues of the south and the international fund. I believe we will achieve results on all these points.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, what do you mean by results? Do you mean you will obtain written guarantees to initiate implementation of Resolution 425?

[Buwayz] I expect this and I believe that during the meeting between President al-Hirawi and President Bush, the United States will clarify its stand on and commitment to Resolution 425. I also believe that the United States will point out that the international conference will not have negative effects on this resolution.

[Correspondent] Do you think the international conference is currently jeopardized?

[Buwayz] Naturally, a conference such as this will touch on extremely delicate issues, issues which were the headlines of long years of war and fighting. The fate of this conference remains unknown and unpredictable. But I believe the U.S. is exerting a huge amount of pressure, demonstrated during the past few days by its refusal of loan guarantees to Israel. I think the U.S. is flexing its muscles and that this a clear-cut message to the Israelis on the issue.

[Correspondent] Do you think this is an Israeli obstruction?

[Buwayz] There is indeed Israeli resistance to the conference. Israel is trying to evade this conference, and it will try again in the near future. But there is international pressure on Israel and there are Israel's interests with the United States. Therefore, I believe that the Israelis will be compelled to make meticulous calculations to safeguard their interests and position. [passage omitted]

Hizballah Figure Wants 'All Detainees' Freed

NC2209123591 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli, former Hizballah secretary general, has affirmed that the Lebanese Army's role must be to fight Israel and liberate the land. He said the state is cooperating with the Israeli enemy in pressuring the resistance fighters and that it is responsible for foiling resistance operations by tipping off the occupation troops on the resistance's activities. He added: This regime is hopeless.

On the hostage issue, al-Tufayli said there were hopes for releasing the hostages and freeing some of the prisoners, and that these hopes came very close to fulfillment. He added: The Israeli enemy is trying to block the process because it does not want any of our brother detainees and the thousands held captive in its jails to be freed. He called for reconsidering the number of detainees required to be released from the enemy prisons. He added: The enemy must release all detainees, and we have to endeavor to reach that end.

Shaykh al-Tufayli was speaking at a ceremony in Libbaya village in western al-Biqa' marking the Prophet's birthday. An Iranian Embassy delegation, officials representing Hizballah and the Islamic resistance, and popular figures and delegations attended the ceremony.

President al-Asad Receives Baker, Delegation

JN2009114291 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and his delegation at noon today. The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

Mr. and Mrs. Baker arrived in Damascus at 1130 today. They were welcomed at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', his wife, senior Foreign Ministry officials, and the U.S. ambassador in Damascus.

Baker, al-Asad Talks Continue

JN2009181591 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1755 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] Damascus, 20 Sep (SANA)—President Hafiz al-Asad received U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and his delegation at noon today. The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd-al- Halim Khaddam, and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

During this meeting, they resumed discussion of the topics that were raised in Wednesday's meeting pertaining to the peace process in the region, the proposed peace conference, and the content of the invitations that will be addressed to the participants in the conference.

They also discussed U.S. assurances related to the peace conference. Progress was made during the talks, and they agreed to continue discussions on this issue.

Baker Departs

JN2009152591 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and his wife left Damascus at 1715 today following a short visit to Syria. He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', his wife, senior Foreign Ministry officials, and the U.S. ambassador in Damascus.

Paper Views Israeli Stand on Peace Conference

JN2209074791 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0330 GMT 22 Sep 91

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Leader al-Asad Defines Components of Peace," AL-BA'TH says: In his statement to the ABC television network, leader al-Asad explained that while Syria is seeking peace by all means, Israel does not want peace. Thus, in his comprehensive statement, leader al-Asad dotted the i's. The paper reviews all attempts, especially by the United States, to bring about peace, as well as Israel's positions on these efforts. It maintains that Tel Aviv is determined to reject all components of a just and comprehensive peace. On Friday, while Secretary Baker was touring the region to push the peace process forward, Yitzhaq Shamir announced that Israel would not pull out of the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, Jerusalem, the West Bank, or Gaza. Moreover, he said that settlement activity in the occupied Arab territories will continue and grow. Israeli War Minister Moshe Arens followed suit, saying that full withdrawal from occupied Arab territories will lead to frustration and, ultimately, to war, not peace.

AL-BA'TH asks: What does this mean? Does it not mean official and declared rejection of the U.S. plan, which is primarily based on international resolutions, especially numbers 242 and 338, resolutions that provide for full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories?

AL-BA'TH notes that leader al-Asad told the American television network that the Arab problem is an integral one, and that dividing it will not help establish a stable peace. The paper adds: Thus, Israel's friends in particular should now be able to realize that the Arabs are not to blame for the region's instability.

Concluding, AL-BA'TH says: We the Arabs are asking for nothing more than our rights. As stressed by leader al-Asad, one does not beg for rights. And under no circumstances can we relinquish these rights. At the same time, we believe that besieging the aggressor—who rejects every move toward a just peace—is a pure international responsibility since its continued rejections may threaten the world with the scourge of new wars. We say this because it is no longer useful to anyone, especially to those who aspire to a safe and stable world, to see Israel in continuous defiance of international legitimacy and its resolutions.

Afghanistan

Rebels Urge Broad-based Group for Moscow Talks

BK2109154291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1521 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Islamabad, Sept 21 (AFP)—An Afghan resistance leader, part of a rebel delegation going to Moscow, called Saturday for the particiption of three hardline resistance groups in talks with the Soviet Union.

The resistance MIDIA [MEDIA INFORMATION DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC AFGHANISTAN] news agency quoted Borhanoddin Rabbani, acting foreign minister of the rebel Afghan Interim Government (AIG), as saying the two factions of Hezb-e Eslami and the Ittehad-e Eslami "must take part" in the mission.

"Their participation is essential as otherwise the results will not be comprehensive," said Rabbani in a statement reported by MIDIA.

One faction of Hezb-e Eslami is headed by Golboddin Hekmatyar and the other by Yunus Khales. Ittehad-e Eslami is led by Abdul Rab Rasul Sayyaf.

The three leaders boycotted the recent talks among Pakistan, Iran and the mojahedin in Tehran on the U.N. proposals aimed at setting up a transitional government in Kabul to hold elections.

The details about the composition of the delegation and the date of the visit to Moscow, in response to an invitation extended to the AIG President Sebghatollah Mojaddedi, have not been formally disclosed.

But, Rabbani said besides Mojaddedi, the AIG Chief Justice Pir Seyed Ahmad Gilani, Defence Minister Mohammad Nabi, and himself were in the team.

He said some resistance leaders were currently holding negotiations aimed at selecting other members for the trip which he described as "important" for the mojahedin struggle.

"All mojahedin leaders must work together at this crucial stage of Afghan jihad (holy war), ignoring their differences," said Rabbani.

Harakat-e Eslami Deputy Leader Wounded in Attack

LD2209171191 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Mohammad Amin Forutan, deputy leader of Afghanistan's Harakat-e Eslami and also a publisher of the periodical KAWSAR, was wounded in a gun attack about midday today when he was returning from a meeting of the representatives of Afghan parties and groups in Peshawar, Pakistan. He is receiving treatment in a hospital now. Yesterday he met a member of the Central Council of Afghanistan's Hezb-e Eslami. The group, led by Hekmatyar, opposes the stance adopted by the periodical KAWSAR.

Eight Government Posts Captured in Paghman

BK2109162191 Hong Kong AFP in English 1612 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, Sept 21 (AFP)—The Afghan resistance said Saturday it had captured eight Afghan Government posts in a 10-day offensive in the Paghman District in Kabul Province.

The Hezb-e Eslami faction said its military commander, Abdul Haq, was supervising the operations in which 90 Kabul soldiers, including many officers, had been killed since the offensive began on September 12.

The faction, headed by Yunes Khales, said four mojahedin died and six were wounded in the battles.

Heavy Fighting in Gardeyz, Casualities Reported

BK2209142091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1416 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, Sept 22 (AFP)—An Afghan guerrilla group said Sunday that 50 government troops were killed and 52 others injured in two days of artillery and rocket fire by mojahedin on the eastern garrison city of Gardeyz.

The AFGHAN NEWS AGENCY (ANA), run by the Pakistan-based fundamentalist faction of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, said the mojahedin rained heavy fire on "sensitive installations" Thursday and Friday in Gardeyz, about 100 kilometers (60 miles) south of Kabul.

"As a result, four tanks, 10 military trucks, two BM-21 rocket launchers and four 76-MM cannons were destroyed," the agency said. "In retaliation, the regime air force heavily bombed mojahedin positions, but no losses were reported" on the rebel side it added.

The Kabul government had confirmed earlier reports that they had exchanged fire with guerrilla forces poised outside Gardeyz. The opposition launched heavy weapons and rocket fire from long range and the army responded to the attacks Wednesday and Thursday, an official spokesman said.

He said the mojahedin had fired at the garrison city, 100 kilometres (60 miles) south of Kabul as the crow files, from 30 kilometers (20 miles) away.

The spokesman was unable to say whether the exchanges of fire were continuing around Gardeyz, often referred to as the gateway to Kabul, which hardline groups of rebels have said they would attack after succeeding in overthrowing the government-held garrison city of Khowst last March.

The ANA said "foolproof arrangements have been made by the mojahedin for running over this garrison."

"All the seven (Pakistan-based) mojahedin organizations are taking an active part in the fighting for Gardeyz and a Shoora (council) has been formed to supervize the operations," the rebel news agency said.

Last week, the president of the mojahedin government in exile, Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, said he was opposed to an offensive on Gardeyz.

Mojadeddi will lead a delegation to New York where talks are expected at the U.N General Assembly to speed up a political settlement of the Afghan crisis. A mojahedin delegation is also expected to go to Moscow at some future date.

India

Further Reportage on Assam Situation

Talks With Militants Rejected

BK2109164591 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] The home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, has ruled out any negotiations with the ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] militants on the hostage issue so long as the army operations continue in Assam. Talking to newsmen in Bhubaneswar today, he admitted that the hostage issue is a humanitarian one. But said that the government cannot accept impossible terms. He appealed to ULFA militants to release the hostages. Mr. Chavan said extremist activities in Punjab, Assam, Kashmir and elsewhere were all interconnected and the government is evolving a comprehensive plan to deal with them.

The army has apprehended 38 ULFA activists during the last 24 hours. The police also arrested 18 ULFA activists in separate operations during the same period. The security forces also discovered 12 ULFA camps in different villages of upper Assam District. Meanwhile, the body of the ONGC [Oil and Natural Gas Commission] engineer, Mr. B.P. Srivastav, was cremated in Bombay today. Mr. Srivastav who was held hostage in Assam by the ULFA activists was killed on Thursday [19 September].

Minister: Situation Improved

BK2209044291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] The defense minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, has said the public sector defense units will be handed over to the private sector if they do not improve their functioning. He was addressing a function near Poona yesterday. Mr. Pawar said the situation in Assam affected by [word indistinct] has improved following the deployment of the army. The army is receiving overwhelming public support in its operations against ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] activists. The defense minister categorically denied any charge of human rights violations in Kashmir.

Strike in Cachar District 23 Sep

BK2309130691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Text] In Assam, normal life in Cachar District has been severely affected because of 12-hour bundh [strike] from 0500 this morning.

AIR [All India Radio] Silchar correspondent reports that shops and markets, government offices, and banks remained closed. Vehicular traffic in the district was off the roads. The call for the Cachar District bundh has been given by United Reservation Movement Council of Assam [URMCA] demanding release of hostages held by ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam]. The URMCA alleged that the state government has a negative approach toward solving the problem.

Clashes Continue in Kashmir; Casualties Reported

Intermittent Shooting at Border

BK2009160891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] In the Kashmir Valley, intermittent small arm and mortar fire is reported in (Bugina) Valley where about 100 trained men attacked an Indian border outpost from across the border yesterday. The attack was repulsed by the security forces. An official spokesman said in New Delhi today that six bodies of the attackers were found lying near the post and three or four more bodies in the nearby mine fields, taking the toll of attackers to 10. The Indian side lost one junior commissioned officer and five other men. Some were injured. The spokesman described the attack as unusual and said the attackers tried to creep in under the cover of darkness with an aim to capture the outpost.

Twenty-Six Reported Dead 21 Sep

BK2109163291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1515 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Srinagar, India, Sept 21 (AFP)—At least 11 people died during an exchange of gunfire between security forces and Muslim militants in Kashmir as 15 more died in violence elsewhere in the northern state, officials and news reports said Saturday.

Militants opened fire during a house-to-house search conducted by security forces in Kashmir's Shopian area, some 65 kilometres (40 miles) from Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir state, late Friday.

State government officials here said Saturday the militants' action led to an exchange of gunfire that left nine civilians, caught in crossfire, and two militants dead.

In Jammu, the state's winter capital, two bomb explosions killed two policemen and injured some 20 more people Saturday, officials said.

The bombings took place during the second straight day of a strike called to protest the abduction by Muslim militants of a Hindu bank manager, officials and witnesses said.

Eight of the injured were in serious condition, the officials said.

The strike was called by Hindu groups to protest the abduction of bank manager K.C. Gupta by Muslim guerrillas fighting to secede Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state, from here September 9. Kashmir's Muslims and Hindus are concentrated in the valley and Jammu region respectively.

The PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said the strike shut shops and business establishments in Jammu city and other major towns in the Hindu-majority Jammu region.

The militant group which abducted Gupta is also holding a former Kashmir minister and her husband, demanding the release of its ex-leader and nine other activists from prison.

Meanwhile, 13 more militants died in gunfire exchanges with security forces elsewhere in the state late Friday and Saturday, PTI said.

Paramilitary troops gunned down four guerrillas trying to cross over to Pakistan through the border and another three returning to Indian-held Kashmir, officials were quoted as saying.

Six more were killed in a number of such incidents elsewhere, PTI said.

Pakistan, which disputes Kashmir's ownership, controls the northern third of the picturesque province.

New Delhi accuses Islamabad of arming and harbouring Muslim secessionists. Islamabad denies the charge, but describes the separatist campaign in Kashmir as a struggle for self-determination.

India and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir.

Indian and Pakistani troops on the Kashmir border continued to exchange sporadic gunfire for the third day Saturday in Keran sector, unidentified officials quoted by PTI said.

It did not report any casualties.

Arms Recovered, 2 Dead 22 Sep

BK2209160091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] A militant and a security personnel were killed in two different encounters between the security forces and the militants during last 24 hours in the Kashmir Valley. Security forces arrested five militants and two other subversives and recovered a large quantity of arms and ammunition during search operations. A private school building was set on fire by militants in Anantnag last night.

Two Party Leaders Killed in Uttar Pradesh

BK2109031191 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] In Uttar Pradesh, two more Samajwadi Janata Party [of former prime minister Chandra Shekhar] leaders have been killed. While Mr. Shyamkaran Yadav was killed in mysterious circumstances in Azamgarh on Thursday [19 September], Mr. Navinchandra Joshi was shot dead in Varanasi yesterday. The official spokesman told our Lucknow correspondent that three persons have been arrested in connection with Mr. Joshi's murder.

Over 100 Arrested for Supporting Tamil Rebels

BK2109002291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1712 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] New Delhi, Sept 20 (AFP)—More than 100 people were rounded up in India's southern Tamil Nadu state Friday for allegedly supporting Sri Lankan Tamil militants, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said.

The police crackdown followed the appearance of wall-posters expressing support for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in a number of towns in the predominantly Tamil state, local government officials were quoted as saying.

Indian investigators have blamed the LTTE, a number of whose activists have fled to Tamil Nadu, for the assassination of former premier Rajiv Gandhi.

Gandhi was killed May 21 when a suicide bomber's powerful device exploded as he arrived to address an election rally at Sriperumpudur town in Tamil Nadu, which is separated from Sri Lanka by the narrow Palk Straits. Police have arrested 14 suspects, mostly LTTE activists, in connection with his slaying.

Aid Consortium Pledges $6.7 Billion Assistance

BK2009150291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] The Aid-India Consortium today pledged $6.7 billion assistance to India for the current fiscal year. This includes a fast disbursing component of $2.3 billion to meet the immediate balance-of-payments requirement to facilitate imports. Of the total aid, $2.2 billion will be from bilateral sources and the rest from multilateral sources. For the first time, the consortium has accepted India's request for fast disbursing assistance. Reports say it comes as a recognition and support to Indian Government's far-reaching economic reform programs.

Japan has also announced concessional loans of 2,000 crore rupees to India. The loans will carry an interest of 2.6 percent and are repayable in 30 years, including a grace period of 10 years. The announcement was made at the Aid-India Consortium meeting in Paris today. The amount represents an increase of 1.7 percent in terms of yen over last year's assistance. In rupee terms, it represents an increase of more than 50 percent.

Iran

Velayati on Iraqi Relations, U.S.-Kuwaiti Pact

NC2309061091 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Excerpts] Foreign Minister Velayati met with Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah in New York yesterday. [passage omitted]

After his meeting with the Kuwaiti amir, Foreign Minister Velayati told correspondents: The Islamic Republic of Iran and Kuwait soon are to form the first joint committee. Commenting on the two countries' relations, the foreign minister said: The future of Iranian-Kuwaiti relations is bright. He described the dispatch of Petroleum Ministry experts to extinguish Kuwaiti oil fires as a symbolic gesture expressing the goodwill of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The foreign minister then discussed Iran-Iraq relations and regional security problems. On Iranian prisoners in Iraq, Velayati said: We have definite documents showing that there are about 5,000 Iranian prisoners still being held captive in Iraq.

On the U.S.-Kuwaiti military pact, Velayati said: The Islamic Republic of Iran opposes the presence of foreign forces in the extremely sensitive Persian Gulf area, and regional security should only be ensured by the regional countries. The foreign minister described Iran's cooperation with members of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] in this field as important and added: The seven-party session of the foreign ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran and GCC members is to be held soon in New York.

'Concern' Over U.S.-Kuwait Pact Expressed

LD2109163791 Tehran IRNA in English 1548 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Tehran, Sept. 21, IRNA—Iran on Saturday voiced concern over the signing of the 10-year security accord between Kuwait and the United States, saying it would lead to the deployment of foreign forces in the region. The tiny oil-rich Persian Gulf state concluded a security accord with Washington last Thursday, which allows Americans to conduct any military action without prior approval of Kuwait for ten years.

The Supreme National Security Council [SNSC] in its Saturday session asked the Foreign Ministry to seek explanations from Kuwait on the contents of the agreement. The session was chaired by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and attended by SNSC [members], political advisors and top military commanders.

Velayati Meets Kuwaiti Amir

LD2209220891 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Mr. Velayati, who is in New York to attend the UN General Assembly [UNGA], gave an interview with the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran [IRI] in which he announced: The main objective of cooperation between Iran and the member states of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] is to maintain security in this region through mutual cooperation. Our foreign minister also met and conferred with the Amir of Kuwait on Sunday. We have a report in this connection:

[Correspondent] Our foreign minister reiterated his opposition to the intervention of foreign forces in the Persian Gulf region, and announced that the presence of the foreigners would not restore security in the Persian Gulf. Mr. Velayati, who is in New York to attend the 46th UNGA, stressed in an interview with the IRI's Voice and Vision, that our country is opposed to the presence of the foreigners. He said: The main objective of Iran's cooperation with the GCC members is to maintain security in this region through mutual cooperations. Our foreign minister also announced that the second joint session between Iran and the six GCC members will be held on the sidelines of the UNGA later this week.

Also on Sunday evening Dr. Velayati met with Shaykh Jabir Jabir Al-Ahmad, the Amir of Kuwait. While referring to the strategic importance of the Persian Gulf region, he stressed that the security of this sensitive region of the world will be secured by the countries of the region only and through the expansion of cooperation among these countries. At the meeting with our foreign minister, the Amir of Kuwait announced that in view of Iraq's two instances of military aggression against Iran and Kuwait, the countries of the region must strengthen their cooperation.

During this meeting, which took place on the sidelines of the 46th UNGA, Shaykh Jabir Al-Ahmad, expressed concern about the fate of the Kuwaiti POWs who are still detained in Iraq. He asked to benefit from Iran's experience in connection with the problem of the POWs so as to help speed up the release of the Kuwaiti POWs. The Amir of Kuwait also expressed gratitude for the dispatch of an Iranian technical team to cap the Kuwait oil wells. He pointed out that the success of the Iranian experts proved that the countries of the region can have effective cooperation in all technical fields. In this connection he termed the formation of the Iran-Kuwait joint economic commission as a positive step, and expressed delight for the growing trend in the two countries' ties.

Kuwaiti Diplomat Summoned

LD2209111391 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Following a decision by our country's Supreme National Security Council, the Kuwaiti charge d'affairs in Tehran was summoned by the director of the Persian Gulf desk of the Foreign Ministry at noon today. The Islamic Republic of Iran's extreme concern over reports received indicating the signing of a military cooperation pact between America and Kuwait was conveyed to him.

At that meeting, the director of the Persian Gulf desk of the Foreign Ministry, Mr. Fumani, stressed: The security of the Persian Gulf region will only be achieved through cooperation between the countries of the region. He also asked the Kuwaiti charge d'affairs for explanations regarding the signing of the agreement between America and Kuwait.

The Kuwaiti charge d'affairs offered assurances that he will reflect the matters raised to his government in order to obtain a suitable response.

Pact Labeled Conspiracy

LD2109110991 Tehran IRNA in English 0906 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Tehran, Sept. 21, IRNA—A Persian daily Saturday lashed out at the U.S.-Kuwait military pact calling it a conspiracy against the Middle East and the Persian Gulf region in particular and appealed to world Muslims to confront such moves.

In its editorial titled "Kuwait, a U.S. Colony". JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI wrote that the pact is drawn up unilaterally to suit the interests of Washington and disgraces the Kuwaiti Government as a powerless subservient.

The nature of the pact and other U.S. moves in the region unveils a vast conspiracy against the Middle East especially the Persian Gulf, it added. Referring to installation of tactical weapons and giving the U.S. permission to carry out any military move in the region even without asking for the consent of the Kuwaiti government, the paper said the U.S. has in fact advanced another step towards achievement of its criminal goals in the region.

The trend of present bitter developments indicated that the U.S. would not face major problems from the reactionary governments of the region in the later stages.

Turning to U.S. claims when deploying forces in Saudi Arabia under the pretext of warding off Iraqi aggression on Kuwait, the daily said that the U.S. by its military presence and pacts proved that it is more aggressive than any other aggressor.

The daily deplored that the governments ruling over the Islamic countries did not have the competence to be the vanguards of campaign against U.S. aggression and stressed that it is the Muslim nations who must rise up to fight against enemies who have come to the region with the intention of plundering.

Pact Viewed as 'Threat'

LD2209152391 Tehran IRNA in English 1045 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Tehran, Sept. 22, IRNA—Two Persian dailies in their editorials Sunday said the U.S.-Kuwait military pact is a threat to regional countries and urged the Iranian Government to confront the move.

The morning daily SALAM wrote that no one denies the need for peaceful coexistence especially with the neighbouring countries. However, the question is whether attainment of peaceful coexistence meant neglect of national security and interests of the largest regional country.

Does being immune of the reactionary sheikhs of the Persian Gulf region from threats mean that the entire territory of these states be put at the disposal of the number one enemy of the Islamic revolution so that it can build military bases and constantly threaten the Islamic republic?, asked the paper. [sentence as received]

While tiny littoral sheikhdoms in southern Persian Gulf ignore all political and security interests of the Islamic republic and even move on the opposite direction, why should Iran keep silent in order to prove it is not adventurist or a threat on Arab reactionaries, asked the daily.

"The Islamic revolution and a country which intends to stand against U.S. domination, has no alternative but with all her power to rise up against this new treason of the Arab reactionaries and has no other option but to oppose the plot of holding the Middle East peace conference."

Referring to U.S. conspiracies against Muslims, SALAM said one cannot oppose U.S. policies while smiling at the reactionary Arab rulers and stretching hands of friendship towards them. Encountering U.S. plots calls for proper encounter against these treacherous agents and conspirators.

Now the American forces have replaced Saddam and taken over Kuwait, said the daily asking if the Iranian officials are of the idea that their policy towards the Persian Gulf states and presence of alien forces has been successful.

Meanwhile, another Persian daily ABRAR said that the U.S. by concluding the military pact with Kuwait has extended its military presence in the region and the U.S. domination over the region has taken a new momentum.

Referring to the concern expressed by Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) over the pact, ABRAR said that Iran should intensify its political campaign and inform the regional people of the dangers posed by the presence of alien forces.

Deployment of American forces in Turkey, Kuwait and possibly Iraq will be a threat on neighbouring countries including Syria and Jordan.

The U.S. will take advantage of this lever for exerting pressure on Damascus and Amman during the Middle East peace conference and for stabilizing the Zionist regime, concluded the editorial.

Damascus Declaration Nullified

LD2009155491 Tehran IRNA in English 1257 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] Athens, Sept. 20, IRNA—The signing of the ten-year defence cooperation agreement between the United States and the Persian Gulf sheikhdom of Kuwait, in Washington Thursday, practically renders the Damascus Declaration useless. Egypt, Syria and the six (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council states that opposed Iraq during the Kuwaiti occupation and the subsequent war, had agreed in a joint declaration in Damascus on March 6 to form an Arab peace-keeping force to maintain security in the Persian Gulf. Both Egypt and Syria had contributed troops to the U.S.-led alliance in Saudi Arabia against Iraq.

The new American-Kuwaiti agreement allows the U.S. to stockpile military supplies in Kuwait and provides it access to ports and airbases in the tiny oil emirate. On May 8 Egyptian President Husni Mubarak surprised the Arab world by announcing that he was withdrawing his troops from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, a sign that the new security agreement had run into serious trouble. Differences had risen between Egypt and Kuwait over Iran's participation in security arrangements in the region, as well as Kuwait's reliance on Americans to maintain security in the region. Outsider Egypt had tried, albeit unsuccessfully, to keep out Iran, the largest regional state which controls the entire northern half of the Persian Gulf, from any regional security arrangement.

The U.S.-Kuwait agreement, coming at the heels of the visit of the emir of Kuwait Shaykh Sabah to Cairo on Wednesday, must have taken Egypt officials by surprise.

Kuwaiti Minister: Relations Should Be Expanded

LD2109144591 Tehran IRNA in English 1705 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Kuwait, Sept. 19, IRNA—Kuwait Foreign Minister Sheikh Salim al-Sabah told a group of Iranian mediamen here Thursday that his government was keen on expanding ties with the Islamic Republic. Asked what practical measures Kuwait has taken in this regard, he replied that Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati has been invited to visit Kuwait, and the Kuwaiti minister of commerce and industry was to attend the 17th Tehran International Trade Fair.

On economic ties between Iran and Kuwait, al-Sabah said "the Kuwaiti market is open to Iranian companies able to offer their expertise and render proper services." He said presently Iranian cargo ships were plying between the two countires with goods for Kuwait.

"We consult with each other on important matters and there has never been any impediment to the consolidation of mutual relations," he added. Al-Sabah favoured reciprocal visits between the two countries' officials and called for direct talks on regional issues.

On regional security, he said providing security for the Persian Gulf rests, before anything else, on the littoral states, and to this end it was necessary to promote cooperation and coordination between Iran and the (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council. Such cooperation does not necessarily mean the signing of agreements, al-Sabah thought. He said the issue was to be brought up in a meeting in New York next week between the Iranian foreign minister and (P)GCC representatives.

Turkish Envoy Denies Border Clash Reports

LD2009134391 Tehran IRNA in English 1206 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] Tehran, Sept. 20, IRNA—Turkish Ambassador, Omer Akbel, was summoned to the Foreign Ministry here last night and was asked by Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific Affairs Alaeddin Borujerdi to explain the unfounded claims of Turkish Defence Minister Barlas Dogu.

Dogu recently alleged that a few anti-government Turkish Kurds escaped into Iran and Iranian border guards opened fire on the pursuing Turkish troops. Omer Akbel catagorically denied all such claims, and said Iranian troops did not open fire on the Turkish troops.

Borujerdi made it clear that such claims violate the Tehran-Ankara policy for expansion of bilateral ties, and said it was better to discuss this kind of issues in the joint border commission of the two countries.

"We believe that the United States, as part of its seditious policy in the sensitive Persian Gulf region, is trying to create such misconceptions among regional states," he added. The Turkish ambassador said that his country fully agrees to the discussion of such issues in the joint border commission. Akbel also expressed hope that Tehran-Ankara relations will further expand under the joint policies adopted by the two countries.

Habibi Denies Reports

LD2309112691 Tehran IRNA in English 1015 GMT 23 Sep 91

["Habibi: Ankara Should Not Be Influenced by Media Reports"—IRNA headline]

[Text] Tehran, Sept. 23, IRNA—First Vice-President and Government spokesman Hasan Habibi here Monday pointed to Turkish media reports on the alleged cooperation of Iran with anti-government Kurdish guerrillas in Turkey as "an instigation by mercenary agents."

Speaking at his weekly press conference, Habibi said: "We expect the Turkish officials not to be influenced by such reports."

As for the establishment of U.S. military bases in certain regional countries and its military buildup, Habibi said: "This move contradicts U.S.'s stance on the issue of disarmament." Turning to the last Thursday conclusion of a defence pact between the U.S. and Kuwait, the government spokesman stressed that security in each region of the world should be maintained through the collective cooperation of the governments of each specific region. "Interference of alien forces will affect relations among countries and this holds true for the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman," Habibi added.

"We not only oppose presence of foreign forces but also consider it against the interests of our neighbours," he stated. Habibi noted that in this connection Iran had asked the Kuwaiti Government to provide explanations on the content of the agreement "according to which relations between the two countries will be formulated."

Based on a report submitted to the cabinet ministers by Housing and Urban Development Minister Serajeddin Kazeruni on Sunday, Habibi said that only 14.2 percent of the urban population in Iran live in rented houses, which is considerably a small percentage. "Most of the people in Iran own their houses and Iran ranks second in the world in this connection," the spokesman added.

Hendi Identified as Intelligence Operative

AU2309105491 Paris AFP in English 1018 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Text] Paris, Sept 23 (AFP)—Iranian businessman Mas'ud Hendi, indicted Saturday in connection with the murder of former Iranian premier Shahpur Bakhtiar, is a member of the Iranian intelligence service, a group opposed to the Tehran regime said here Monday.

Afshin Alavi [spelling of name as received], a spokesman for the People's Mojahedin, a leftist group that seeks to overthrow the Islamic Republic, said Hendi "is a member of the Ministry of Intelligence and Security" in Iran. He said reports Sunday in the Iranian media saying Hendi was fired from the Iranian secret service in 1987 for having collaborated with French intelligence were "flagrant lies."

"It is clear that under the regime of the mullahs, the slightest suspicion of espionage (for a foreign power) leads systematically to a death sentence," Alavi said. "How could Hendi, accused of collaborating with the French, manage to obtain official permission to settle in France?"

The spokesman, quoting "information received from Iran," said Hendi was "still a ministry member when he arrived in France, where he conducted all his terrorist activities on orders from Intelligence Minister (Hojjat ol-Eslam Ali) Fallahian, under the direct supervision of (President Ali Akbar Hashemi) Rafsanjani."

Hendi was indicted for "complicity and association with criminals connected with a terrorist organization" in the murders of Bakhtiar, the late Shah's last premier, and his secretary, Faroush Katibeh, who were found stabbed to death on August 6 at Bakhtiar's home in Suresnes, near Paris. Eleven other people arrested with Hendi on Thursday have been released.

Hendi told investigators that he was a grandnephew of the Islamic republic's late leader, the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni, but the Iranian Embassy here has denied this. It said, in a statement, that Hendi had "no family connection, even remote" with Khomeyni. It also denied any involvement by Teheran in Bakhtiar's murder.

The Bakhtiar assassination has already hurt relations between Paris and Tehran, however, and a visit planned to Iran by French President Francois Mitterrand in the fall appears likely to be cancelled, infomed sources said.

Sources close to the investigation said that under interrogation, Hendi implicated Iranian intelligence as well as "the government and, by name, a cabinet minister" in the Bakhtiar murder. The sources would not say who the minister was.

Hendi is accused of helping two of the three alleged hit-men, Ali Rad Vakili and Mohamad Azadi, enter France with regular visas, then leave after the killing with fake Turkish passports, the sources said. Vakili was arrested in Switzerland last month and is awaiting trial here on charges of homicide and involvement with a terrorist organization.

Unity Among Islamic Sect Leaders Urged

LD2209153191 Tehran IRNA in English 0856 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Tehran, Sept. 22, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Sunday said that the Islamic world in this particular juncture is in urgent need of devotion, openmindedness and tolerance of the leaders of various Islamic sects.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani made the remark in his opening message to the first session of the Supreme Council of the 'Assembly for Affinity Among Islamic Sects.' The gathering is held on the occasion of the 'Unity

Week' September 22-27, the two dates celeberated by the Sunni and Shiite Muslims, respectively, as the birthday of Prophet Mohammad.

A proper understanding of status of Muslims at the present world, said the message, prompts all Muslim scholars and leaders to strive towards materialization of great aspiration of Muslims—unity of the Islamic ummah.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's message referred to massive efforts launched in the contemporary world to attain unity, especially after the victory of the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran under the leadership of the late Imam Khomeini.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran, as the global base of Islam, embraces all those who long for materialization of this aspiration and those who are ready to take practical steps in this connection," said the message. The president assured that sincere and collective efforts of the participants will help remove all bottlenecks in attaining this goal.

President: Students May Express Political Views

LD1909165291 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in English 1445 GMT 19 Sep 91

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani this morning received a group of professors of Islamic studies discussing with them issues relating to academic activities. The president said: There is a good opportunity at the Iranian universities today for maintaining contact between the country's youths and the scholars of Islamic studies. Meanwhile, he called for providing facilities for scholastic research at the universities. President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, who chairs the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution [SCCR], remarked that contemporary Islamic studies should cover diverse modern bodies of knowledge such as politics, economics, and international relations.

Elsewhere at the meeting, the president said that the students are entitled to express their views on different political issues, while university officials should closely supervise the implementation of the SCCR's resolutions.

Nepal & Bhutan

Prime Minister Supports Democracy for Bhutan

BK2209125691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1249 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Text] Kathmandu, Sept 22 (AFP)—Nepalese Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala reiterated Sunday Nepal's support for those fighting for human and democratic rights in Bhutan, state radio reported.

"When we were fighting for democratic rights and the restoration of democracy many friendly countries ... extended their support," Koirala said. In the same way, "we support the people of Bhutan for their political and human rights," he said.

He said more than a thousand Bhutanese of Nepalese origin had fled to southern Nepal where they were living in "miserable conditions."

Exiled Bhutanese officials currently living in Nepal put at several thousand the number who had been forced to leave after they were accused of being against the Bhutanese monarchy.

"Our foreign policy is not to interfere in the internal affairs of a sovereign country. However, we cannot remain silent spectators when people fighting for human and political rights are suppressed by force," Koirala said.

"Negotiation is going on with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees to help the destitute people of Bhutan currently in Nepal," he added.

Pakistan

Paper Cited on German Arms Sales Embargo

BK2109031491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] A leading daily of Pakistan, THE NEWS, has reported that Garmany has imposed an embargo on all military sales to Pakistan with immediate effect. The embargo also covers material which will be used for the manufacture of lethal weapons. The report says consequently, shipments of purchases already made have been stopped.

Our Islamabad correspondent reports that a number of other military hardware suppliers have recently imposed the ban on arms sales to Pakistan. They include Austria and some Scandinavian countries.

Army Chief Comments on Indian Attacks in Kashmir

BK2109160291 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] Army Chief General Asif Nawaz said maximum reliance on domestic resources will help in formulating future policy on a firm basis. He was speaking to garrison officers at Camp Malir in Karachi today. Referring to the recent incidents of violations by Indian forces along the Line of Control in Kashmir, he praised the determination, courage, and devotion of all those officers and soldiers who repulsed the attacks on their positions in a befitting manner. The army chief said: It is not our policy to escalate the situation along the Line of Control, but we will give a befitting reply whenever attacked. Later, Gen. Asif Nawaz visited corps headquarters in Karachi where he was given a comprehensive briefing on the operational readiness of the troops.

Song Ping-Led CPC Delegation Arrives 20 Sep

BK2009113891 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] An 18-member delegation of the Chinese Communist Party led by the member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the party, Mr. Song Ping, arrived in Islamabad this afternoon on a week-long visit to Pakistan. The federal minister for information and broadcasting, Mr. Abdus Sattar Lalika, and the secretary general of the Pakistan Muslim League, Mr. Iqbal Ahmad Khan, received him.

The leader of the delegation, Mr. Song Ping, in a statement at the airport said relations between Pakistan and China have become a model of state-to-state relations and a good example of south-south cooperation.

Meets Muslim League Chief

BK2009164091 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 20 Sep 91

[Text] An 18-member delegation of the Chinese Communist Party led by the member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the party, Mr. Song Ping, arrived in Islamabad this afternoon on a week-long visit to Pakistan. A very warm welcome was accorded to the delegation. The leader of the delegation, Mr. Song Ping, in a statement on arrival said friendship between Pakistan and China has become a model. He said during their stay the members of the delegation would exchange views on further strengthening of (?their) friendship. The delegation will also visit Taxila, Tarbela Dam, Lahore, and Karachi.

The members of the Chinese delegation had a meeting with the president of Pakistan Muslim League, Mr. Mohammad Khan Junejo, this evening. They discussed matters of bilateral interest and issues like Kashmir, Afghanistan, nuclear program and the changing international (?system). There was complete identity of views between Pakistan and China on these issues.

Welcoming the Chinese delegation, the president of Pakistan Muslim League, Mr. Mohammad Khan Junejo, said that Sino-Pak friendship has withstood the test of time and is an example for others.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Song Ping said that both the countries enjoyed very good and friendly relations, no matter what internal changes occur in both the countries or which party is in power.

Meets Prime Minister Sharif

BK2109163791 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 21 Sep 91

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, has called for giving to the existing Pakistan-China relations a new depth and dimension which is in tune with the aspirations of the people of the two countries. He was talking to Mr. Song Ping, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of Chinese Communist Party, who called on him in Islamabad today along with other members of his delegation. The prime minister briefed Mr. Song Ping on the economic reforms that his government is pursuing to seek self-reliance. He also briefed the Chinese guest in detail on Pakistan's views on the international situation, with particular reference to the situation in the region, relations with India, and the new international order. There was total unanimity of views between Pakistan and China.

The Chinese leader reiterated the conviction of his government that the relations between Pakistan and China, which are already a model for interstate relations, would grow further in the future. He also underlined the need to explore fresh avenues of expanded cooperation and trade relations.

Supports Kashmir Stand

BK2309033691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Text] The leader of visiting Chinese delegation, Mr. Song Ping, has said that his country has always supported Pakistan's principled stand on the Kashmir issue at all international forums. Addressing a reception in Islamabad, he said China wants an early solution of this issue in a just manner.

Referring to the Sino-Pakistan friendship, he said both countries are committed to develop mutually beneficial relations and to extend all possible assistance to each other in times of need. Mr. Song Ping commended Pakistan's assistance when China recently had to face one of the worst floods.

Sri Lanka

President Notes 'Sinister Motives' in Impeachment

BK2209121091 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 22 Sep 91

[Excerpts] The parliament has the power vested in it to serve as an overall adviser to the cabinet of ministers. The one and only power that the executive presidency holds is to discharge its executive powers in terms of the rules and regulations enacted by that same parliament, says President Ranasinghe Premadasa. President Premadasa further said that the common man—the voter—casts his precious franchise at the presidential, parliamentary and provincial council elections not for an individual, but for the liberal and farsighted policy enunciated by the United National Party [UNP].

The president pointed out that in 1972, a prime minister was chosen not by the precious vote cast by the people, but by members of parliament who were so elected. The prime minister, according to the then Constitution, was elected with the power to select a president who was virtually powerless and was a puppet head of state. In that context, such a president was helpless in formulating policies that could contribute to the progress and prosperity of the islandwide electorate. He or she was subject to these dictates of power-party blocs. These were the adverse factors inherent in the then presidency and motivated the UNP to create a powerful executive presidency. Such a presidency need not play the role of a dictatorship because the Constitution and the Supreme Court were existing as constitutional safeguards. When a motion of impeachment is brought against the executive presidency, the president cannot dissolve parliament. The president stressed that he had no intention of dissolving parliament, nor does he hope to do so. The UNP was successful in obtaining 193 seats out of 237 at the presidential, parliamentary and provincial council elections. At all the elections, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party and other opposition parties pleaded with the voter to help in changing the role of the executive presidency. A large mass of people have today fully understood the sinister motives behind the perpetrators of impeachment motion and the people are equally aware that he as president had nothing against the Constitution to deserve such an insult. These observations were made by the president when he presided at the executive committee meeting of the UNP in the Colombo central organization held yesterday at the Sri Sucharita Hall. [passage omitted]

He reiterated that he had nothing which ran contrary to the powers of the executive presidency. As the executive president today, tomorrow, and during the next four years I can only pledge that I would strictly abide by the provisions laid down in the Constitution, was to say the least, [words indistinct] Constitution, which the vast majority of you, the voters, endorse by a majority vote for the president.

On the prorogation of parliament, President Premadasa said that [word indistinct] was reason the powers embodied in the Constitution. The prorogation enabled him and the people to clearly understand the clandestine move of the decisions and the sinister motives behind a motion of impeachment. You and I and my people are now fully conscious that this treacherous plot was aimed not only at Premadasa, but against you and the people, concluded the president.

Premadasa To Offer Opposition Prime Ministership

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[Text] The Sri Lankan president, Mr. Premadasa, says he will offer the post of prime minister to the main opposition leader, Mrs. Srimavo Bandaranaike, if the ruling United National Party [UNP] loses majority support in parliament. Political analyst say President Premadasa's offer made at a meeting of the UNP is a tactic to split the opposition and put pressure on the dissidents in the ruling party. Meanwhile, the dissidents led by the former minister, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, have demanded the resignation of Mr. Premadasa for supplying arms to the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam]. He told a news conference in Colombo that by openly admitting that the government had supplied arms to the LTTE, Mr. Premadasa had violated the oath of office.

Fierce Fighting Rages in Weli Oya Area

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[Text] Fierce fighting is now going on between the Operation Lighting Strike and the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] around the Camp Michael area in Weli Oya. Disclosing this at yesterday's weekly news briefing at the cabinet office in Colombo, Colonel Sarath Munasinghe, said that terrorists reinforced the Camp Michael area with at least 3,000 of their cadres drawn from Trincomalee, Mullaitivu, and Kilinochchi areas. The security forces repulsed the surprise activity cropped up by the LTTE in this area on Wednesday. He described the operational area at Weli Oya with the help of video clippings. Colonel Munasinghe, describing the Camp Michael, told newsmen that it is reported to be an important base as fast as the LTTE is concerned because of the fact that this base is being used for the manufacture of Johnny mines. He pointed out that every inch of this area is covered with mines, and troops destroyed a large number of satellite camps around the Camp Michael area. Colonel Munasinghe disclosed that the ¼ Base commander named Anbu and another 15 subleaders were confirmed killed during this operation. Anbu is the Weli Oya leader and was appointed ¼ commander during the time of the Balawegaya Operation. According to the intelligence reports, Colonel Munasinghe said Brigadier Swarnan had moved to Jaffna and was with the LTTE leader, Prabhakaran, in the Jaffna area.

He made it clear that the security forces virtually surrounded the Camp Michael area except the eastern side. The LTTE is using mortars, (?small) arms, RPG's [rocket-propelled grenades], grenades, and [word indistinct], while Sri Lankan forces used conventional weapons.

Briefing the Operation Lightning Strike, Colonel Munasinghe stressed the operation was to bring about the enemies from their positions and destroy them and their bases. They have no intention of capturing any camp of the LTTE because of the fact that armed forces have no idea of holding the bases. The main aim of the operation was to draw out the enemies from their defenses and destroy them as far as possible. Most of the camps in the Weli Oya area would have now been abandoned and all the terrorists have been moved in the Camp Michael area.

Responding to another question, Colonel Munasinghe said capturing the Camp Michael is not as important as Elephant Pass. He said it is just a junk base and has nothing to do with the military. The troops have so far cleared about 12 mine fields. The whole area is heavily mined, he said, and the forward movement of the forces are very slow. A large number of young boys around the ages of 15-20 years have been forcibly taken to their cadres by LTTE. He added that the present operation at Weli Oya is supposed to be one of the major operations carried out by the security forces.